

Concordia Theological Monthly

Vol. X

AUGUST, 1939

No. 8

The Mode of Baptism

A striking diversity exists in the Christian Church with reference to the mode of administering the rite of Baptism. Broadly speaking, the Eastern Church baptizes by immersion, the Western Church by pouring or sprinkling.

In the Greek Orthodox Church baptism of infants or adults is by trine immersion, "which is most essential in the administration of Baptism," although in case of extreme weakness or mortal danger a child may be baptized by affusion.¹⁾ Among the other Oriental communions the manner of applying water varies. The Nestorians, for example, stand the candidate erect in water reaching to his neck and dip the head three times. The Armenians first immerse the child and then thrice pour a handful of water on its head. However, throughout the Oriental churches the basic thought of covering the entire body or parts of the body with water persists in virtually all rituals, so that we may speak of immersion as the distinctive Eastern mode of baptizing.²⁾

The Western Church, if we ignore for the moment the Baptists and other immersionists, considers the manner in which water is applied in the rite of Baptism an adiaphoron. The major groups employ affusion or sprinkling but do not condemn the practise of immersion. In fact, the Roman Catholic ritual provides for immersion as well as for affusion. A similar survival appears in the Anglican Prayer-book. The Prayer-book of the Protestant Episcopal Church parallels the two modes, the rubric reading: "And thus, naming it (the child) after them, he shall dip it in water discreetly or else pour water upon it, saying," etc. The Presbyterian Church ruled out immersion in 1644 but, like the Methodists, recognizes the baptism of those immersed. The Lutheran Church has

1) Klotsche, *Christian Symbolics*, 45.

2) For detailed information cf. Warfield, *Studies in Theology*, 345.

no formularies with provisions for immersion, and while it does not consider a baptism by immersion invalid, it would hardly lend itself to this mode of baptizing because of confessional and other reasons.³⁾

The Baptists and the other groups insisting upon immersion⁴⁾ assert that such practise is essential to the validity of Baptism. They appeal in support of their position to the significance of the Greek word βαπτίζειν and its Latin equivalents; to the circumstances in which the baptisms of the New Testament were administered; to the significance of the rite as a burial with Christ; and to the concessions of those who, while practically rejecting immersion, admit that it was practised by the apostles and the early churches.⁵⁾ These groups call immersion the "New Testament mode of baptism" and until recently⁶⁾ were unanimous in affirming that immersion of the believer is essential to real Christian baptism. It is the purpose of this article to show that such a position has no Scriptural foundation and that an objective study of the Scriptures and of the literary and archeological evidence leads to the conclusion that the mode of baptism is an adiaphoron.

When Christ instituted Baptism, He did not specify any particular mode to be used. The word which He employed to designate the Baptism of the New Testament was not a new word which He coined for this specific purpose, but one which was in common use and whose meaning can, therefore, be determined. Βαπτίζειν had been long in use among the Jews to express religious washings of all kinds. Thus Luke records that the Pharisee marveled that Jesus had not first washed (ἐβαπτίσθη) before dinner (Luke 11:38); and Mark speaks of the washings (βαπτισμούς) by the Jews of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables, Mark 7:4. These religious washings are called by the writer to the Hebrews διάφοροι βαπτισμοί (Heb. 9:10) and refer to the purifications (καθαρισμοί) of the Old Testament. They formed a part of the Ceremonial Law and included such items as the purifying of the Levites, the priests, persons and things defiled, lepers, sacred objects, etc.

While the βαπτισμοί of the Old Testament had nothing to do with the Baptism of the New Testament, the Septuagint designates the performing of one of the prescribed ceremonial ablutions as βαπτίζειν, Ecclus. 34:25,* and the manner in which these βαπτισμοί were performed indicates the meaning which the Jews associated

3) Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, 104; Stump, *The Christian Faith*, 333.

4) The immersionist groups are listed in *Popular Symbolics*, 427.

5) Johnson's *Universal Cyclopaedia*, sub Baptists.

6) McNutt, *Polity and Practise in Baptist Churches*, 127.

* The Septuagint is quoted according to the Stuttgart edition of A. Rahlfs.

with the word βαπτίζειν and its derivatives. Thus we read of the cleansing of the Levites, Num. 8:6, 7: "Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them. And this shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them: *sprinkle* the water of expiation on them." Of the purifying of the priests Ex. 29:4, 21, states: "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation and shalt *wash* them with water. And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar and of the anointing oil and *sprinkle* it upon Aaron and upon his garments." The Mosaic regulations regarding persons and things defiled specified: "Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead and purifieth not himself, defileth the Tabernacle of the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel; because the water of separation was not *sprinkled* upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is yet upon him," Num. 19:13. Of the unclean tent and vessels and persons we are told, Num. 19:18, 19: "And a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water and *sprinkle* it upon the tent and upon all the vessels and upon the persons that were there and upon him that touched a bone or one slain or one dead or a grave. And the clean person shall *sprinkle* upon the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself and wash his clothes and *bathe* himself in water, and shall be clean at even." With reference to the lepers we read, Lev. 14:7-9: "And he [the priest] shall *sprinkle* upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean." And as to the cleansing of sacred objects we note, Lev. 16:14-19, that the mercy-seat and the altar were to be purified by the *sprinkling* of blood on them and before them. These were some of the διάφοροι βαπτισμοί mentioned Heb. 9:10. They are called "divers washings" not only because they referred to divers objects, but also because they were performed in various ways. God Himself prescribed the mode to be used, and, to say the least, it is significant that the usual mode was not immersion but *sprinkling*.

The βαπτισμοί of the Old Testament did not limit the meaning of βαπτισμός to a specific mode of applying water. Neither does the word βαπτίζειν *vi vocis*. Βαπτίζειν and its root word βάπτειν are not modal verbs. They are factitive verbs and express the fact of wetting without implying or specifying the mode to be employed. This is true of βάπτειν as well as of βαπτίζειν. Dan. 4:33 we read: "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven." The Septuagint has it: καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δρόσου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ ἐβάφη. Here βάπτειν evidently cannot mean to dip or immerse. It states merely the fact

that Nebuchadnezzar's body was wet. Βαπτίζειν is used in a similar manner in the Septuagint. Naeman was told by Elisha, 2 Kings 5:10: "Go and wash in Jordan seven times," etc. From v. 14 we learn καὶ κατέβη Ναμαν καὶ ἐβαπτίσατο ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ κ. τ. λ. Did Naeman immerse himself? He was told to wash (λούσαι, v. 10), and he obeyed that direction. If nothing else, βαπτίζειν here is used as synonymous with λούειν, which is a generic term, signifying to wash without reference to mode. It is also significant that Jerome translates this passage "*Descendit et lavit in Iordane*," using for ἐβαπτίσατο *lavit*, again a generic term, meaning to wash. Of Judith we are told, Judith 12:7: καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο κατὰ νύκτα εἰς τὴν φάραγγα Βαιτυλῶνα καὶ ἐβαπτίζετο ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ ἐπὶ τῆς πηγῆς τοῦ ὕδατος. Here we have a baptism which the language employed and the attending circumstances prove not to have been an immersion. Judith "baptized" or washed herself not into or in but *at* (ἐπὶ) a spring. She was in the military camp of Holophernes, where regard to decency would forbid her immersing herself. Finally we read Ecclus. 34:25: βαπτίζομενος ἀπὸ νεκροῦ καὶ πάλιν ἀπτόμενος αὐτοῦ, τί ὠφέλησεν ἐν τῷ λουτρῷ αὐτοῦ; The reference here is to Num. 19:20 ff., where the law relative to the ceremonial cleansing from touching the dead is recorded. The Mosaic regulations specified *sprinkling* as the most important feature of this rite of purification, so that in this passage βαπτίζειν virtually means sprinkling. We note again, as in 2 Kings 5:10, 14, that βαπτίζειν and λουτρὸν are synonymous in thought.

Turning to the New Testament, we find βαπτίζειν and its derivatives βαπτισμός, βάπτισμα, βαπτιστής used 122 times, and in every instance they refer to a ritual or religious act. Never do these words *vi vocis* imply a washing by immersion. On the contrary, in a number of passages the conception of immersion is excluded. Thus Mark 7:4: "And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washings" (βαπτισμούς) "of cups, brazen vessels, and of tables" (κλινῶν, couches). For these ceremonial washings (καθαρισμοί) the Jews had jars of water, John 2:6. The cups and pots and brazen vessels might have been immersed, though there are no cogent reasons to assume that this was done; but to suppose that the tables, rather couches, were immersed in water is unreasonable and certainly out of question. Again, the Pharisee, Luke 11:38, marveled that Jesus did not wash (ἐβαπτίσθη) before eating. The parallel passage is found Matt. 15:2, where instead of βαπτίζειν, νίπνυνται τὰς χεῖρας is used as a synonym. And in Mark 7:4, where some versions have ἐὰν μὴ βαπτίσωνται, the reading ἐὰν μὴ ὀαντίσωνται also is found. The implications of these passages are that the ceremonial ablutions before meals were performed not

by immersion but by pouring or sprinkling and that βαπτίζειν does not and cannot mean immersion and immersion only. 1 Cor. 10:2 Paul writes: "All" (the fathers) "were baptized (ἐβαπτίσαντο) unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Comments William M. Taylor: "This first recorded baptism, so far as appears, was not immersion. Sprinkled the tribes might be, as the clouds poured down water or the spray was dashed upon them by the fury of the wind; but their baptism in the sea was contemporaneous with their 'walking upon dry land in the midst of it.' It is a very small matter; but when esteemed brethren assure us that the word 'baptize' always and everywhere means immerse, it becomes important to remark that in the very earliest case in reference to which the term is applied, it very evidently can have no such significance. There was an immersion here, indeed, but it was that of the Egyptians; and no one will be very eager to follow their example."⁷ Thus the use of βαπτίζειν in the Septuagint and in the New Testament clearly shows that it is not a modal verb and that the Jews did not associate with this word a specific method of applying water. Hence, the statement that βαπτίζειν signifies immersion, and immersion only, and thereby establishes immersion as the New Testament mode of baptism is without Scriptural foundation.

The New Testament records of the baptisms by John the Baptist, the apostles, Philip, and Ananias do not offer sufficient data to enable us to ascertain with absolute certainty how these baptisms were administered. Yet these records do contain enough hints and implications for us to infer how several of the recorded baptisms were *not* performed. John told the multitude, Luke 3:16: "I indeed baptize you with water, but One mightier than I cometh . . . ; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The fulfilment of these words occurred on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:17, 18. This baptism with the Spirit and with fire was performed not by immersion but by an outpouring (ἐξέχεεν, Acts 2:33) of the Spirit and by cloven tongues like as of fire that sat upon each of them. The disciples were not carried or plunged into the Spirit and into the fire, but the Spirit and the fire came to them. That this Pentecostal baptism really was the baptism predicted by John is explicitly stated by Peter, Acts 2:33: "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He [Jesus] hath shed forth (ἐξέχεεν, cf. vv. 17, 18) this which ye now see and hear." Since, therefore, we find neither in the words of Peter nor in the occurrences on Pentecost anything that would even faintly suggest

7) Taylor, *Moses the Lawgiver*, 119.

immersion, we conclude that, when John spoke of baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire, the term baptism did not signify to him immersion but rather an outpouring. And is it not reasonable to assume that a similar mode of applying water, viz., of pouring, would suggest itself to John when he baptized? This assumption is confirmed by the attending circumstances of his baptisms. If we keep in mind the short duration of his ministry and the multitudes that came to him to be baptized (Matt. 3:5), it becomes apparent that it would have been a physical impossibility for John to immerse all these people. Nor does the fact that John baptized ὕδατι and ἐν ὕδατι demand a baptism by immersion, for we have here the instrumental use of the dative and of ἐν, indicating what John used when he baptized. Regarding John's baptism the sainted Dr. A. L. Graebner wrote: "The gospels say John baptized ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην, ὕδατι, ἐν ὕδατι. All these expressions do not necessitate the assumption of immersion. The number of applicants being very great (Matt. 3:5) and water being plentiful (John 3:23), the most decorous, expeditious, and cleanly way of administering the sacred rite may have been this, that John stood in the river, ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, the people, one by one, came near him, also in the river, and the Baptist, lifting water from the river, poured it upon the people before him, so that the water with which he baptized (ὕδατι, or ἐν ὕδατι) would run back again into the river, εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην."⁸⁾ Hence, while we cannot definitely establish the mode of John's baptism, the records contain enough information to make pouring or sprinkling more than likely.

The account of the other baptisms of the New Testament leads to the same conclusion. On the day of Pentecost three thousand were baptized. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls," Acts 2:41. We ask, On which day were these people "added unto them?" The record replies ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ, on that day on which they were baptized. To say, as some exegetes do, e. g., Zahn, that these baptisms were performed at a later time, transgresses the principles of true interpretation. They received the Word, were baptized, and were added to the Church the same day. Indeed, it was through Baptism that they became members of the Church.⁹⁾ That is what the text states. How were they baptized? Three thousand by immersion? Such a task would have surpassed the physical strength of the apostles. Besides, where would they have found enough water for this purpose? There are no rivers or streams in Jerusalem, and to suggest the use of public pools disregards the fact that this mass

8) *Theol. Quart.*, V:5.

9) Stoeckhardt, *Roemerbrief*, 285.

baptism took place only fifty days after the Jews of Jerusalem had put Jesus to death. We do not know how these three thousand were baptized, but the circumstances warrant the assumption that these baptisms were not administered by immersion. Again, Philip baptized the eunuch of Ethiopia, who was traveling through a desert country (Acts 8:26), where even today water is found in sparing quantities. (The text has $\tau\iota\ \psi\delta\omega\rho$.) Both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and both came up out of the water, $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\epsilon}\beta\eta\sigma\alpha\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\mu\varphi\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\ \psi\delta\omega\rho$ $\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\beta\eta\sigma\alpha\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\ \tau\omicron\ \psi\delta\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$, vv. 38, 39. Does this of necessity imply immersion? If so, both Philip and the eunuch were immersed, for they are joined together by the text. Furthermore, there is nothing in the record of the baptism of Saul by Ananias (Acts 9) and of the jailer at Philippi (Acts 16) that would indicate that immersion was the only possible mode of these baptisms. Luke relates of Saul in rapid succession that he is sitting in a room, blind and in a weakened condition, that he has his eyes opened, arises and is baptized, takes food and is strengthened. The obvious meaning is that everything here stated occurred in the house in which Saul was staying, and it is very unlikely that a private dwelling would have facilities for immersing a person. Likewise with the jailer at Philippi. The events follow in swift succession: the earthquake, the opening of the prison doors, the loosening of the prisoners' bands, the despair of the jailer, the admonition of Paul and Silas, the religious instruction given to the jailer, the washing of the prisoners' wounds, the baptism of the jailer and his family, the placing of food before the guests. All this happened at the same hour of the night (midnight), so that it is difficult to believe that this baptism should have been performed by immersion. Somewhat different is the baptism of Cornelius and his household. Here immersion is practically excluded by the terms of the record. Peter asks, Acts 10:47: "Can any one forbid water, that these should not be baptized" ($\mu\acute{\eta}\tau\iota\ \tau\omicron\ \psi\delta\omega\rho\ \delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\tau\alpha\iota\ \kappa\omega\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha\iota\ \tau\iota\varsigma$)? Note that the object of $\kappa\omega\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha\iota$ is not the person to be baptized but the water. The water is not to be prevented from being brought to where it should be used. It should be brought without delay in order that these persons might be baptized where they were. Such language does not suggest immersion.

Thus a brief review of the circumstances in which the baptisms of the New Testament were administered fails to impress upon us the cogency of the argument of the immersionists that John the Baptist and the apostles baptized by immersion, "the New Testament mode of baptism." Not one baptism in the time of the apostles is recorded in such a way that immersion must be accepted as the New Testament mode. On the contrary, in a number of instances

immersion cannot reasonably be assumed, and it is probable that immersion was never practised in apostolic days.¹⁰⁾

A New Testament mode of baptism is found by some in the "significance of the rite of baptism as a burial with Christ." Reference is made to Rom. 6:3, 4 and to Col. 2:11, 12, where the phrases "buried with Him by Baptism into death" and "buried with Him by Baptism" are found. This "burial with Christ" is interpreted to signify "buried under water," i. e., immersed. However, the apostle in neither of the quoted passages is speaking of the mode of baptism, but of the meaning and benefit of the Sacrament, as the contexts clearly indicate. "If such a text as Rom. 6:3, 4 ('buried with Christ by Baptism into death') be explained to refer to the mode of baptism, then such texts as Acts 22:16 ('be baptized and wash away your sins'), Titus 3:5, 6 ('by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly'), and Heb. 10:22 ('having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water'; cf. Ex. 24:8; Heb. 9:19; 1 Cor. 10:2) would, by a like hermeneutical rule, have to be explained to refer to the mode of baptism, and accordingly various modes of baptism would be taught in the texts."¹¹⁾ The fact remains that these symbolic references to Baptism neither imply nor specify a particular manner of christening and therefore fail to prove the assertion of a New Testament mode of baptism.

The evidence of history and archeology proves conclusively that the early Church was conscious of the fact that the manner in which Baptism was administered was not essential to the validity of the Sacrament. The *Didache*, written between 90 and 165 A. D., states, chap. VII: "Concerning Baptism, baptize thus: Having first rehearsed all these things (the explanation of the way of life, chap. I—IV; the way of death, chap. V; and the final exhortation, chap. VI), baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in running water; but if thou hast no running water, baptize in other water, and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou hast neither, pour water three times on the head in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."¹²⁾ Of this quotation Harnack says: "We have here the oldest evidence for the permission of baptism by aspersion; it is especially important that the author betrays not the slightest uncertainty as to its validity. The evidences for an early occurrence of aspersion were hitherto not sufficiently certain, either in respect to their date or in respect to their conclusiveness. Doubt is now no longer

10) *Theol. Quart.*, V:8.

11) Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, 102.

12) *The Apostolic Fathers* (Loeb Classical Library), I, 311.

possible."¹³ And the sainted Dr. E. A. W. Krauss comments: "Dieses Zeugnis aus der *Didache*, sicher aus dem Anfang des zweiten Jahrhunderts, ist von hoechster Wichtigkeit gegenueber allerlei Taufschwaermern; und man sollte es ihnen gegenueber stets in promptu haben."¹⁴ However, it is argued that baptism in the early Church by pouring or sprinkling was only an unusual or extraordinary mode of baptism. The universal custom was to baptize by immersing.¹⁵ Writes C. F. Rogers: "It is generally assumed that the usual custom of the early Church was to baptize by total immersion. . . . This assumption is based mainly on evidence supplied by literature. But we must not forget that the writings of the Fathers tend to depict the ideal in their minds rather than chronicle the actual that lay before their eyes. To find out what was actually done by the mass of Christians, we must turn to the evidence of archeology, for which data are drawn so largely from cemeteries and other regions where the popular will has always had free scope."¹⁶ The evidence of archeology is very much in favor of pouring as the manner of applying water in baptism. "The testimony of the catacombs is strongly in favor of aspersion or affusion. All their pictured representations of the rite indicate this mode, for which alone the early fonts seem adapted; nor is there any early art evidence of baptismal immersion."¹⁷ "It is most noteworthy that from the second to the ninth century there is found scarcely one pictorial representation of baptism by immersion, but the suggestion is almost uniformly either of sprinkling or pouring."¹⁸ On the basis of his archeological studies Rogers reached the conclusion that the popular mode of baptism for the first 700 years of the Christian Church was not immersion but pouring.¹⁹ However, it is not our purpose to establish what the mode of baptism in the early Church was. We are interested merely in showing that the literary and archeological evidence points to the fact that the early Church did not acknowledge any particular mode as the New Testament mode of Baptism and that it did not regard any specific form of administering the Sacrament as essential to its validity.

And this is the position also of the Lutheran Church. It is true that Luther has been called an immersionist, but the fact

13) Harnack, *Die Lehre der zwoelf Apostel*, 23.

14) *Lehre und Wehre*, 54:250. Cf. Cyprian's comments on clinic baptisms, e. g., Walther, *Pastorale*, 118.

15) Hoefling, *Sakrament der Taufe*, 50.

16) Rogers, *Baptism and Christian Archeology*, 240.

17) Withrow, *The Catacombs of Rome*, 535.

18) Bennett, *Christian Archeology*, 406.

19) Rogers, *Baptism and Christian Archeology*, 406.

of the matter is that, while Luther spoke favorably of immersion for reasons of symbolism (X:2112), he expressly declares that immersion is not essential to a legitimate baptism (XIX:66) and defines *badtēn* as *baden, oder eintauchen, oder nass machen mit Wasser* (X:2131). The Large Catechism therefore defines baptism as pouring (36, 45), immersion (65), sprinkling (78). The Lutheran Church believes that "the purpose of the Sacrament of Baptism is not 'the putting away of the filth of the flesh' (1 Pet. 3:21), but the saving of the soul, its cleansing from sin; neither is the power of Baptism in the water itself (wherefore much water has no more power than little water); therefore, in whichever way the water is applied in the act of baptizing (by immersing, pouring, or sprinkling), provided that it is applied in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, it is in every respect a true Baptism. The Christian pastor of the orthodox Lutheran Church should conform to the usage of his Church in reference to the mode of baptism, as a testimony against the Baptists, who even today insist that immersion is essential to a valid baptism. According to the Word of God the particular mode of baptizing is in itself a matter of Christian liberty. Gal. 2:4, 5,"²⁰⁾

Yet even in the Baptist Church a change in the traditional attitude towards non-immersed Christians is taking place. Writes Dr. W. R. McNutt: "Close Communion, once quite universal among Baptists, and still largely so in the Southern States, is really close Baptism: only those may come to the table who are church-members by virtue of their being immersed believers. This polity has been long on the shift; the invitation to fellowship in the Lord's Supper having first been extended to all Baptists, then to members of immersing churches other than the Baptists, and finally to 'all who love the Lord Jesus Christ.' This indicates, of course, that the basis of welcome to the sacred meal has moved, in the open Communion churches, from baptism to discipleship, from a symbolic rite to the regenerate life symbolized thereby. . . . Certain English Baptist churches long since began to practise mixed membership, that is, a membership composed of the immersed, those otherwise baptized, and those unbaptized by any method. Changing conditions in the States, particularly the overchurched of communities and the rapid rise of unchurched suburban areas, . . . have conspired to force open the doors of many American Baptist churches to non-immersed members from pedobaptist churches. The change has been going on quietly as a matter of necessity, if not always of desire. One or two partial studies of the extent of open membership polity have been made, and these afford ground

20) Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, 104.

for the assertion that today it is the practise of between 500 and 1,000 churches, almost exclusively within the Northern Convention. The status of these members coming from non-immersing churches is not yet uniformly fixed. Their status ranges all the way from loosely affiliated members, with limitations of rights and privileges, to membership in complete and regular standing. — This means a decided change of the hitherto uniform basis of membership: a change from the regenerate, immersed believer to the regenerate, baptized (of whatever mode) believer. This shift will be seen to be a lineal development of open Communion. . . . In fairness to the increasing number of open membership Baptist churches we must set down their conviction that by this practise they in no wise relax their allegiance to the New Testament mode of baptism; for whenever they baptize, they immerse. They administer the rite in no other form, nor do they contemplate doing so. They are as positive immersionists as their fathers; they merely eschew their sectarianism by freely fellowshiping Christians to whom time has given many names." ²¹⁾ WALTER A. BAEPLER

Holy Scripture or Christ?

(Concluded)

Men are asking us to substitute for the authority of Scripture the authority of Christ or at least to subordinate the former to the latter. If we did that, we would be left without any authority for our teaching and without any foundation for our faith. And that means, of course, that there would be no Christian theology and no Christian religion.

III

These men are, *in the first place*, asking us to discard the *authority of Scripture*, of parts of the Scripture and of all Scripture.

We shall have no difficulty in proving that they deny the authority of *parts of the Bible*. They say it loudly enough. Before we can raise the charge, they admit it; for they glory in it. They raise the charge against us that we believe every word of the Bible. They insist that it is the right and the duty of the Christian theologian to free the Bible of its many blemishes and to inform the Christians of its many mistakes. You have heard Brunner saying that much of the Bible needs to be chiseled off. You have heard Alleman declaring that that part of the Bible is infallible which is Gospel, and must be accepted, but that the other parts, the dregs, the trifles, and the filth, must be cast out. These men do

21) McNutt, *Polity and Practise in Baptist Churches*, 127 ff.

not want it to be kept secret that in their estimation the Church would have been better off if certain portions of the Bible had never been written. But since they have been written and incorporated in the Sacred Volume, the Christians must be trained to read it with caution and discrimination. They must be trained to "search the Scriptures" not as humble disciples studying and treasuring each word, but as cautious critics, who will not take anything on trust. Says Brunner: "The revelation of God is not a book or a doctrine, but a living person. The relation between the Scripture and this person is clearly one of subordination: 'Search the Scriptures, . . . and they are they which testify of Me.' . . . Of course, it was easier to have God's Word enshrined in the Holy Book, so that whatever you took out of this sacred cupboard was divine inspiration, than to search the Scriptures for their witness of Christ. So far as the orthodox theory of Scripture is concerned, there is no distinction between this and the Indian or Mohammedan belief in their sacred books: the Bible has become a divine oracle. . . . This materialistic, or, to be more exact, this idolatrous, acceptance of Bible authority has done great damage to Christian faith." (*The Word and the World*, pp. 84, 92, 94.) Says Pfarrer Hoff, addressing a meeting of students in Germany: "Wir unterscheiden bei aller Ehrfurcht vor der Autorität der Heiligen Schrift als Ganzes das, was göttlich darinnen ist, von dem, was menschlich, allzu menschlich, was jüdisch ist. . . . Das unterscheidet uns von der starren Orthodoxie, dass wir die sogenannte Verbalinspiration ableugnen, dass wir nicht gewaltsame Beziehungen auf Christum setzen, dass wir vielmehr den Ton legen auf das 'Suchet in der Schrift.'" (See *C. T. M.*, V, p. 407.) Search out in Scripture what is authoritative and reject the rest! Prof. Baumgaertel: "The letter (*Wortlaut*) of Scripture we consider of secondary importance. . . . The outstanding feature, the *whole*⁹⁾ is what counts, not the details, which are in many instances erroneous and objectionable." (See Moeller, *Um die Inspiration der Bibel*, p. 57.) We raise the charge that the modern theologians divest a great part of Scripture of its authority, and they tell us: That is exactly what we are doing; we teach our people that half of Scripture is true and half of it false, that half of it is saving truth, the other half faulty dressing; we want them to distinguish between the spiritual content of Scrip-

9) The concept "the whole of Scripture" (*das Schriftganze*) belongs to the stock in trade of the theologians who put Christ and Scripture in opposition. It is a variation of the "Christ," "Word of Christ," "Word of God," concept. The discussion of this monstrosity, which makes the "whole to be of an entirely different nature than its component parts" (Kliefoth calls it *eine unvollziehbare Phrase*—a phrase expressing an unachievable thought; Pieper: "This phrase cannot be invested with sense and meaning," *Chr. Dog.*, I, p. 243) must await another opportunity.

ture and the unspiritual admixture, the historical, scientific, and moral errors; it is high time that Christendom ceased taking everything in Scripture for God's truth. They tell us: "The Bible is not of uniform value and equal perspicuity. It has carried with it the husk as well as the kernel. There are many things in the Old Testament, and some in the New Testament, which are temporal and even provincial. When we read Old Testament stories of doubtful ethics and *lex talionis* reprisals, with their cruelty and vengefulness, their polygamy and adultery, it is difficult for us to sympathize with the theory of verbal inspiration, however much we may sympathize with the motive which led to it." (H. C. Alleman, in *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1936, p. 241.) George R. Andrews, Congregationalist, writing in the *Christian Century* of March 15, 1939: "What is the Bible, this text-book of religious education? It is the literature of the Jewish people until about two thousand years ago, containing fragmentary history, poetry, romance, myth, legend, biography. . . . We have said it was the word of God, authoritative from cover to cover, infallible in form and spirit. . . . In the record, i. e., in the Bible, is to be seen the expression of all the smallness, meanness, ignorance, superstition, and chicanery as well as the nobleness, generosity, and moral inspiration of which the Jewish race was and is heir. If the Bible is the word of God, it is so entangled in the mass of human weakness, ignorance, and depravity that great moral and religious understanding and insight are required to separate the wheat from the chaff." H. C. Alleman: "The Bible is not a sacred oracle speaking infallibly in every book on everything that is contained in it." (*The Lutheran*, Jan. 14, 1937.) — Our charge stands.

And then we raise the further charge that they are depriving the Church of the spiritual treasure which these discredited portions of Scripture carry. They will not admit *this* charge, but we maintain it. We say with Luther: "Sintemal kein Buchstabe in der Schrift vergeblich ist." (X, p. 1018.) And if they refuse to accept Luther's word in this instance, Luther will refer them to St. Paul: "*Whatsoever things* were written aforetime were written for our learning," etc. Rom. 15:4. "All Scripture . . . is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. 3:16. And if they will not take St. Paul's word for it, — some do not hesitate to declare that he blundered now and then, — St. Paul will refer them to Jesus, who insists that not a single statement, a single word, of Scripture can be divested of divine authority, John 10:35. All of Scripture has a spiritual content. Which story of Scripture is unspiritual and must be classified as husk, dregs, filth? Is it the story of Jesus' changing the water into wine? Some of them, impelled by the subjective authority which we shall presently examine, may stamp it as harmful. St. John

judges of it in this wise: "Jesus manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him," John 2:11. Well, St. John was mistaken. Is it the story of Abraham and Hagar? Did St. Paul consider it unspiritual? See Gal. 4. What about Gen. 1 or the story of Jonah? Mistakes, legends, lacking spiritual value? Jesus puts the stamp of His approval on these and similar accounts, finds them true and worthy of study. "Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female?" Matt. 19:4. "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," Matt. 12:40. And when they so glibly speak of the trifles and filth in the Bible, we turn away from them in disgust and listen to Luther, who with a reverent spirit and a full sense of the spirituality of the Bible speaks thus: "What is here [Gen. 24:22] related is adjudged by reason to be a most carnal and worldly affair; and I myself often wonder why Moses expends so many words on such trifling things, since he was so brief on much more important things. But I do not doubt that the Holy Ghost wanted these things to be written down for our instruction. For nothing is presented to us in Scripture that is trifling and useless; for *all that is written* was written for our learning, Rom. 15:4." (I, p. 1711.) On Gen. 38: "Why did the Holy Ghost have these shameful and unspeakable things written down and preserved to be told and read in the Church? Who will believe that such things are profitable for edification and salvation? . . . These examples are set before us for instruction and comfort and for the strengthening of our faith; they show the great grace and mercy of God." (II, p. 1167 f.) Everything written in Holy Scripture is of importance to our spiritual well-being. Everything is, we know, not of the same importance. The Gospel content is of supreme importance. But everything else contained in the Bible serves the Gospel-message, even what they call "moral incongruities," such as the doctrine of eternal damnation, the sentence pronounced against the Canaanites, the imprecatory psalms, etc. Spurgeon said: "We could not afford to dispense with one verse of Holy Writ. The removal of a single text, like the erasure of a line of a great epic, would mar the completeness and connection of the whole. As well pluck a gem from the high priest's breastplate as erase a line of revelation." "Nothing," says Luther, "is presented to us in Scripture that is useless." And they who rob the Church of one line of Scripture are guilty of a grievous wrong. They may come under the sentence pronounced Rev. 22:19.

We charge these men, however, not only with annulling parts of the Bible, but with subverting its authority *in toto*. They do that, first, by discrediting portions of the Bible. Let this once sink

into the minds of men that a book which claims that it is absolutely true in its every statement and spiritual throughout is full of contradictions and errors, deals with trifles, and contains unethical teachings, and they will discredit it in general. Speaking of the Koran, Luther says: "Des wird mich (achte auch wohl auch keinen vernuenftigen Menschen) niemand bereden ewiglich, dass ein Mensch (so er anders ein Mensch ist, der bei Vernunft ist) sollt' mit Ernst glauben koennen einem Buche oder Schrift, davon er gewiss waere, dass *ein* Teil (schweige denn drei Teile) erlogen waere, dazu nicht wissen muesste, welches unterschiedlich wahr oder nicht wahr waere, und also im Sack kaufen muesste, oder drei Lot Gift unter einem Lot Zucker gemischt essen und trinken sollte." (XX, p. 2275.) Apply this to the Bible as edited by the moderns. It is psychologically impossible that the pupils of Schleiermacher, Althaus, and Alleman who have been filled with suspicion of parts of the Bible should not lose confidence in the Bible as a whole, the more so as these men cannot, as we shall presently show, provide us with a sure criterion for distinguishing between the true and the false. Who will accept any particular statement of the Bible with full confidence if he thinks that the preceding and the following statement is untrustworthy? Such a book can no longer serve as the source of doctrine and the foundation of faith.

Again, it is the declared purpose of these men to depose the Bible as the chief, the only, authority. Not Scripture, but Christ! They are willing indeed to let Scripture stand as the secondary authority. But that is divesting Scripture of all authority, all real authority. No man will accept the teaching of Scripture as binding if he is told that Scripture cannot speak the final word. Whatever these men write in defense of their thesis can only wean men away from putting their trust in Scripture.

Moreover, they are rather outspoken in warning men against bowing to the authority of Scripture. We heard Martensen deplore the fact that the "individual Christian does not maintain a relative independence over against the Scriptures." And M. G. G. Scherer told us that "Christian liberty knows how to distinguish between Scripture and Scripture," that "Christian liberty does not fall into the sin of Bibliolatry. We refuse, they declare indignantly, to submit to a paper pope—"der tote papierne Papst des Bibelbuchstabens." To accept the Bible as infallible requires "a slave-mentality," says R. H. Strachan (*The Authority of Christian Experience*, p. 16). Obtaining doctrine out of Scripture, says Hofmann, "would imprint a legalistic feature (*gesetzlicher Zug*) on doctrine"; it would make of Scripture "a code of laws of faith (*Sammlung von Glaubensgesetzen*)." (*Schriftbeweis*, I, p. 9. See Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, III, p. 510.) We ask them to take the Christian

teaching word for word out of Scripture, to be bound absolutely by what Scripture states on any given doctrine, and they tell us: Scripture is not a manual of doctrine.¹⁰⁾ To bind men to every single statement of Scripture would be intolerable legalism. A writer in the *Luth. Church Quarterly* of this year (p. 33) says: "There is a spirit of legalism that pervades many of the ranks of Mid-Western Lutherans, a kind of approach to the truth of God which insists on 'book, chapter, and verse' for all the 'eye-blinks' of life and must be undergirded by the authority of print on paper for every conscious breath in order to be assured of full salvation.

10) Let us take time out to discuss the use of this term "manual of doctrine." Our moderns do not like it. In the statement quoted in the first paragraph of the preceding article we read: "There has been a growing tendency to regard the Scriptures less as an authoritative manual of revealed tenets in theology and morals than as the medium of disclosing to us the personal Christ." The Bible is not "a code of doctrines"; absolutely not, says Wehrung: "Der evangelische Schriftgebrauch sucht nicht Lehrformeln oder Beweisstellen"; and Driver: "The Bible is not a logically articulated system of theology"; and Oman: "Doctrines must not 'be drawn from Holy Writ like legal decisions from the statute book'; and Alleman: "The Bible does not contain even a system of theology"; and M. Kaehler: "Die Bibel ist kein Lehrbuch"; and R. F. Grau: "Die Heilige Schrift ist uns nicht mehr ein grosser vom Himmel herabgesandter Gesetzeskodex mit seinen einzelnen Paragraphen, Beweisstellen genannt"; and the *Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenz.* 1931, p. 52: "Luther hat die Bibel nicht zu einem Paragraphenkodex gemacht." Dr. Pieper does not hesitate to say: Die Heilige Schrift ist das Lehrbuch der christlichen Religion (I, p. 79). Why do these men oburgate us for saying that the Bible is a manual of doctrine, ein Lehrbuch? They know well enough that nobody ever said that the Bible is written in the form of a handbook of dogmatics. But they hear us saying that the Christian theologian must take his teaching directly from the Bible, that he dare not construct his own doctrines, and that whatever the Bible teaches in any of the proof-texts is binding upon him. And that they resent. They resent the idea that they must teach what is there written, exactly as it is written. They say that would require a slave mentality which they do not possess; children might be expected to do that but not they. That is why they proscribe the term *Lehrbuch*. We cannot understand these men. We do not feel enslaved when God requires us to teach exactly what He has set down in Scripture. And while we do not customarily use the term *Lehrgesetz*, we will use it when it is necessary to point out what God teaches in the Bible requires unconditional, absolute acceptance. We are willing to be slaves in this respect. Paul gloried in the term "slave of Jesus Christ." The Christian theologian is ready to say with the child Samuel: "Speak, for thy servant heareth." He uses the words "law" and "statutes" in this connection, Ps. 119. Cannot these men connect the concept "obedience" with anything else than legalism? Do they not know that there is an evangelical obedience which hearkens to the Word of the Lord willingly, joyfully, thankfully? We thank God that He has revealed all doctrines to us, in definite, exact terms. We say with Dr. Reu: "Wir fragen bloss, ob es nicht auch einen im Evangelium wurzelnden Gehorsam gibt, der sich an das ganze Wort seines Gottes gebunden weiss?" (*Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, March, 1939, p. 190.) — Protesting the terms "manual of tenets," "code of doctrines," these men are, in most cases, protesting against being bound by Scripture. They stand for *Lehrfreiheit*, liberty in matters of doctrine.

In its last analysis this resolves itself into a conception of the Holy Scriptures as a mechanical work of the Holy Spirit, inerrant in every word and detail in their original form."¹¹ The Modernists go a step farther, several steps farther. J. M. Haldeman presents their position thus: "The truth is (according to Modernism) man of today has altogether outgrown the Bible. It may have done for the infant state of the human mind, but to put the rising generation *under its clamps and chains* would be to restrict the mental growth of the human race." (*A King's Penknife*, p. 108.) But moderns and Modernists are one in their protest against ascribing so much authority to the Bible. Whether they reject the authority of the Bible altogether or reject it as lodged in "book, chapter, and verse," they are weaning men away from the authority of Scripture.

Finally, the denial of Verbal Inspiration carries with it the subversion of the authority of Scripture. And it is to be noted that the proponents of the principle "Not Scripture but Christ" invariably denounce the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration. Note that G. P. Fischer, in the passage quoted above, after speaking of the tendency to subordinate Scripture to "the personal Christ," immediately adds the statement "The absolute inerrancy of Scriptural statements is no longer maintained in England and America by numerous theologians who are firmly attached to the principal doctrines of the evangelical system." The reader will not ask us to prove our "invariably." It is not possible that a theologian who insists that certain portions of the Bible must be stricken out can believe that the Bible is verbally inspired, inerrant throughout. But if the denial of Verbal Inspiration stands, the authority of Holy Scripture falls. Need we elaborate this? If the Bible, the words of the Bible, is not written by divine inspiration; if the authority of God does not inhere in every word of the Bible and in these very words, its authority is *nil*.

Some do not hesitate to say that right out. Dr. Brunner, one of those who subordinate Scripture to "Christ," declared before a gathering of alumni and students at Union Theological Seminary: "I never believe anything because Paul said it; but I don't believe anything that Paul didn't say." The *Christian Century* of Feb. 15, 1939, which reported this, added that Dr. Brunner justified the apprehensions of the few Presbyterian Fundamentalists who have not been very happy at having this neo-orthodox Continental theologian teach at Princeton. The *Christian Century* treats the matter lightly, because it takes the same position as Brunner and cannot realize what a scandal and a crime it is for a Christian

11) It was in discussing this article in the *Quarterly* that Dr. Reu made the statement quoted in Note 10.

theologian to proclaim: "I never believe anything because Paul said it." So we are told concerning Bishop Aulén, Sweden, who "holds that faith owes its existence and growth to a 'spirit-complex' controlled by the glorified Christ," that "it is no vital matter to him whether his teachings always agree with the Bible." (See *Luth. Companion*, Feb. 9, 1939.) These men will not, as a rule, speak out so plainly, but every one who believes that the writings of Paul are not inspired in the true sense of the word and do not constitute the chief, the only, authority, will have to say: "I never believe anything because Paul said it."

These men think they are losing nothing by destroying the authority of Holy Scripture; for do we not retain the essential message of the Bible? "I don't believe anything that Paul didn't say!" And speaking of Bishop Aulén, the writer in the *Lutheran Companion* says: "For the sake of fairness it should be stated that, on many points, he is in full agreement with the Bible." But if a man "never believes anything because Paul said it" and feels at liberty to cast away certain statements of Paul as chaff, he is facing a terrible danger. Dr. W. R. Inge, himself a pronounced Liberal, tells him that he is in danger of throwing away the *wheat* with the chaff. He said in a lecture: "We ought to be in a better position to understand the Bible; but it has been steadily losing ground as the center of the religious life of the English people. Among the educated the Bible is not much read. . . . We cannot go back to the old Bibliolatry, but an effort is to be made this year to revive the Bible. *It will certainly be a calamity if the wheat is thrown away with the chaff.*" So also Luthardt: "Das Dogma von der Inspiration loeste sich unter den Haenden der neueren Exegeten und Kritiker immer mehr auf. Neben der frueher verkannten und nun geltend gemachten menschlichen Seite der Schrift *schwand immer mehr die goettliche.*" (Luthardt-Jelke, *Komp.*, p. 118.) If you once permit yourself to discard any portion of the Bible, what (but the unspeakable grace of God) will keep you from discarding all of it? And if you lower the authority of the Bible in any degree, how long will it remain an authority at all? — All is lost where men make light of the authority of Holy Scripture, Is. 8:20.

But we are not losing anything, they say. Though we do not make Paul our authority, we still believe what Paul believed and taught, and we believe and teach that on a perfectly good authority. We have a way of knowing which are the essential truths that Moses and Paul taught. Apply our criterion, and you will find the saving truth. — Let us examine this criterion, and we shall find, *in the second place, that the authority which they offer us is perfectly useless.*

This is their criterion: "From what the New Testament shows

us of the manner in which Jesus revealed God to men we may learn something about the way in which the Bible as a whole may become 'the Word of God' to us. . . . When the reader has discovered what the writer actually said and meant, he wants to ask further, Is this what I am to believe about Christ? Is it true? Probably no one who reads this book will think that this question has the self-evident answer: Of course it is true, *because* it is in the Bible. . . . The criterion lies within ourselves, in the response of our own spirit to the spirit that utters itself in Scripture." (C. H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible*, concluding chapter.) Our own spirit must tell us what is false and what is true. W. A. Brown describes the criterion thus: "How can we tell what part of the Bible is revelation and what is setting? There is one very simple and effective way to do this. It is to bring everything the book contains into touch with the central personality in whom the story culminates—the Lord Jesus Christ." (*Beliefs that Matter*, p. 226.) "Pillow your head on the Master's bosom," as De Witt said above; "seeing visions and dreaming dreams," as Oman said; put your confidence in "the song, the light, the life, within your own soul," as Vichert said—that is the way to arrive at the saving truth. It is "the spirit-wrought faith," Schaefer told us, which "applies a sifting process to the Bible word and thus gets the Word of God, the Word of Christ." The authority under which these men operate, the voice which tells them what parts of the Bible to reject, what parts to retain, is "Jesus," the song of Jesus in our hearts, our own faith, our own spiritual judgment about divine things.

Now, this authority, this criterion, is perfectly useless. It is based on the believer's experience and judgment, on the judgment of a fallible human being. Forsaking the *terra firma* of objective certainties, where God has revealed the truth in definite terms, where the truth of God's own word guarantees absolute certitude, this method of arriving at the truth sets the soul adrift on the sea of subjective uncertainty and unreliability. It is useless for the *individual*. The sinner is looking for the saving truth and is told to listen to the song in his heart. How shall he know whether it is the sweet voice of Jesus or the deceptive word of Satan? And what shall he do in the day of distress when he finds nothing in his heart but doubt and despair?

And it is useless for *the Church and for theology*. We need to be sure that we are teaching all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded us, Matt. 28:20. But who shall tell us which portions of Scripture bear the authority of Jesus and which portions are harmful human additions? The Bible itself has no appendix containing these two lists. So the individual believer must tell the rest of the believers which passage finds a response in his own spirit.

But other believers protest that their spirits do not respond to this passage. Shall then a majority vote decide the matter? Oh, no, says Dr. Stier, it must be a unanimous vote. Discussing our difficulty, he says: "We must here finally consider the following. It is very possible, and, indeed, it very frequently happens that, when this standard, 'What deals with Christ?' is applied to Holy Scripture, very different results are obtained. On the strength of this test a certain passage will look like God's Word to one more than to another. Indeed, this very thing may happen, that one and the same individual Christian will along these lines obtain at different times different results. . . . So it is clear that the test 'What deals with Christ?' as far as and as long as applied by an individual Christian, cannot produce an absolutely binding result as to how much of Scripture is the 'Word of God.' The results obtained on these lines can only be individualistic and subjective." Who, then, may here speak with authority? Dr. Stier solves the difficulty in this way: "The test 'What deals with Christ?' can yield objective and absolutely binding results only when applied by the entire body of the believers. Here we must leave the matter rest: whatever in Scripture has proved itself, by this test, to be God's Word and in whatever degree it has thus proved itself, that much is, in that degree, God's Word." (See *Theol. Monthly*, 9, p. 211.) We certainly cannot leave the matter rest here. We cannot wait till an ecumenical council, made up of all Christians, convenes, and we cannot wait till they have all agreed on what passages are spiritual. And if they all agreed, the Church would not accept their verdict. The subjective opinion of one Christian counts for nothing as regards the question of what our real Bible is to be, and a million subjective judgments, added together, count for just as little. The anxious Christian cannot entrust his salvation to the vote and decision of human beings.

The Church would be in a sorry plight if she would have to depend on the subjective opinions of her members to establish how much of the Bible must be accepted. H. Sasse: "The modern churches have discarded the principle of the sole authority of Scripture. What, then, will serve as the *norma normans* in place of Scripture? Christ, they tell us. But who is 'the Christ,' who is to be found 'by means of the Bible'? We know only that Christ who is found in the Bible for there, and only there, He speaks to us. Who is the judge that will tell me in cases of doubt where Christ speaks and where only Scripture is speaking? Have I not, then, set up my reason, my spiritual and moral sense, as the *norma normans*?" (*Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenz.*, Feb. 18, 1938.) Again: "Luther's celebrated dictum" (misunderstood and mis-

applied) "that the 'true test' by which all Biblical books are to be judged is to 'see whether they deal with Christ' can open the flood-gates to a false, because altogether subjective, criticism of the Bible." (*Here We Stand*, p. 117.)

Up till today "the entire body of the believers" has not spoken on this matter. To our knowledge no ecumenical council has met and drawn up the required list. Up till now the theologians have not reached a unanimous decision on this point. "Those who reject the church doctrine of inspiration in favor of some lowered form have never been able to agree among themselves as to which parts of the Bible are inspired and which are not, or as to what extent any part is inspired." (L. Boettner, *The Inspiration of the Scriptures*, p. 82.)

Do not trust those who offer to fix you up a list of passages which constitute the real Bible. Even if all the theologians had agreed on such a list, Luther would say: "Sie fuehren mich auf einen Affenschwanz." He said that (III, p. 1693) with reference to the enthusiasts who denied the efficacy of the means of grace, and he will say it to the modern enthusiasts who offer to fix us up a good Bible on the authority of their spirits' response to the spirit that utters itself in Scripture. Are you going to entrust your spiritual safety to the subjective opinions of men? ¹²⁾

And then, when they offer us their list, — which we could not accept in any case, — they tell us that what they offer us is useless. The list contains John 3:16 and the related passages. But asking us to study John 3:16 and the other passages, they warn us that these words are not inspired. Only their spiritual sense is inspired. You cannot rely on what the bare words seem to say; the deep insight of the theologian and the spiritual vision of the believer must be set to work to uncover their real sense. What

12) Dr. A. J. Traver is absolutely right when he writes in *The Lutheran* of May 10: "Lutherans have not been satisfied with the statement that the Bible contains the Word of God. . . . It might mean that the Bible contained a great deal that was error. Then it would mean that we would have to select the true from the false in the Bible, a most dangerous liberty. Naturally we would be influenced by our own desires. We would accept what we wanted to accept and reject what we did not want." But this terrible situation would arise if Dr. Traver were right in what he says in the very next paragraph: "The Bible is" (italics in original) "the Word of God in the statement of our faith. It is true in all matters that pertain to religion" (our italics). "It is not a text for biology or for chemistry. It knows nothing of electricity or of airplanes. There is no reason that it should. These are matters for the investigation and discovery of the human mind. But man, by his own wisdom, cannot know God. The Bible is the revelation of God to us; the gracious gift of salvation comes to us through the Bible. The Holy Spirit Himself comes through its pages to help us to believe. The center of the Bible is Jesus Christ. Every part of the Bible is tested by its relationship to Him." Who shall make the test?

did Baumgaertel tell us? The letter, the *Wortlaut*, of Scripture is of secondary importance; what counts is the whole of Scripture. H. Wheeler Robinson tells us: "The confident appeal to the Scriptures as affording an infallible direction of faith and conduct is made impossible if that is sought in the *letter*" (italics by author) "of the Word of God to men. But that is a gain rather than a loss. . . . We may confidently claim that the fuller recognition of the principle of mediation, by throwing us back on the *inner content of the revelation instead of its literary expression and record*" (italics ours), "is part of the unceasing providence of God over His people" (*The Chr. Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 175). Disabuse yourself of the idea that it is an easy matter to establish the articles of the Christian faith. John 3:16 in itself proves nothing. Somebody will first have to demonstrate what "the inner content of the revelation" here given is. The "literary expression" may be faulty, since that was formulated by the human medium John. Luthardt warns us that it is not easy to find out what God really revealed. First the theologians must construct *das Schrift-ganze*, and that they get by making Christ, not Scripture, the foundation of faith. And to become authoritative, "three factors must be added to 'the whole of Scripture': Scripture, the Church, and the believing subject." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 31, p. 277.) We need Scripture; that is true. We need John 3:16. But only after the Church has spoken on this passage, and only after the believer has dug through the shell of the words of this passage and discovered its "inner content," only then can we know what God has revealed.

If this criterion, the subjective feeling of man, must decide, the Church and the individual Christian will never know the truth. There are those who tell you that they cannot feel that the imprecatory psalms reveal a spiritual truth. How many will vote their way? Others say that the doctrine of eternal damnation is not a godly doctrine. Shall their feeling decide the matter? Others tell us that they abhor the doctrine of the vicarious atonement. And when we tell them that according to God's revelation "God made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), they will tell us that that is only the literary expression of a truth which is far different from what the clumsy words of St. Paul seem to indicate. — The Church certainly would never know what things Jesus commanded her to teach if God had authorized the theologians to set up their spiritual insight as the arbiter of doctrine. Such a method is perfectly useless.

And what a wicked thing it is! How these men are puffed up with self-conceit! Going back of the letter to find the true meaning, they set themselves above the Holy Spirit, who revealed the

truth in these very words and letters. "And this is the old devil and old serpent, who also converted Adam and Eve into enthusiasts and led them from the outward Word of God to spiritualizing and self-conceit." And when Luther adds (*Smalc. Art., Trigl.*, p. 495): "Just as also our enthusiasts [at the present day] condemn the outward Word," we add: That is exactly what they are doing at this present day, setting themselves above Scripture. Luther's words apply today: "I had the last year, and have still, a sharp warfare with those fanatics who subject the Scripture to their own boasted spirit. . . . By means of this saying, 'The Scriptures are obscure,' a set of impious men have exalted themselves above the Scriptures themselves, . . . till at length we are compelled to believe and teach nothing but the dreams of men that are mad." (XVIII, p. 1741.) Again, this self-conceit is a form of idolatry, self-idolatry. They set themselves above Scripture, the Word of God! And they ask us to trust their word more than the written Word of God—to commit the sin of idolatry. "Sie suchen ihre eigene Tyrannei, dass sie uns moegen aus der Schrift fuehren, den Glauben verdunkeln, sich selbst ueber die Eier setzen und unser Abgott werden." (Luther, V, p. 336.) They are ever speaking of "Bibliolatry." What sort of idolatry are they committing and leading others to commit? And, worst of all, they rob the Church of the certainty of doctrine, and the Christian of the assurance of faith. Happy is the preacher who, preaching on any text of Scripture, can confidently say: "*Haec dixit Dominus*,"¹³ and his hearers will bless him. The anxious sinner needs the assurance which only God's own Word can give. It is making sport of him to say: *Haec dicit Thomas Muenzer*.

The men with whom we are dealing will resent the charge that they are foisting their own authority on the Church. They protest that their motto is: *Haec dicit Iesus Christus*. However, their own statements, as quoted in the preceding paragraphs, show that they are operating under their own authority, the authority of their spiritual sense and the like. And as to the claim that they make much, make everything, of the authority of Jesus, we shall show, in the third place, that they reject the authority of Jesus.

They do this first, by rejecting Scripture as the sole, the final, authority. For the authority of Jesus in the realm of grace is lodged exclusively in Scripture. What Jesus would here tell us, He tells nowhere but in Scripture. "Through their word," through the word of the apostles, written down in Scripture, men come to

13) Luther: "The preacher should boldly say with St. Paul and all apostles and prophets: *Haec dixit Dominus*, God Himself has said this. *Et iterum*: I have been an apostle and prophet of Jesus Christ in this preaching. . . . For it is God's Word, not mine" (XVII, p. 1343 f.).

faith and are kept in faith, John 17:20. Study again the passages listed under I, and you will not fall prey to the delusion that Jesus speaks to men outside of Scripture. Why do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of the world? Because Jesus appeared to you somewhere, somehow, and gave you that assurance? No; only because of the words written in John 1. Sasse is absolutely right: "We know only that Christ who is found in the Bible, for there, and only there, He speaks to us." Luther is absolutely right: "Outside of His Word and without His Word we know of no Christ, much less of Christ's thoughts." (XVII, p. 2015.) "Wenn ich ohne das Wort bin, nicht daran denke, noch damit umgehe, so ist kein Christus daheim." (VIII, p. 749. See also XI, pp. 453, 455, quoted above.) Assuredly, Christ is the chief Corner-stone, Eph. 2:20. But if you would build on Him, you must build yourself "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," Eph. 2:20. "He that shoves the word of the apostles and prophets aside does not place himself on Christ, the Corner-stone, but *setzt sich daneben*." (Pieper, I, p. 141.) *The Presbyterian* says the same. It is heartening to find that, while so many Lutherans have accepted the *extra-Enthusiasticum* of Zwingli and Calvin, this Reformed writer takes the position of Luther: "All current discussions relate more or less directly to that fundamental question: Have we an objective, authoritative norm of truth or have we not? Is there given us a revelation of truth which we can use as an infallible rule of faith and practise, or are we to grope on without such a final authority? Some will say with emphasis that we have Christ, who is the standard by which all must be measured. We accept that statement with this addendum, that except for the Bible we cannot know Christ nor understand Him, even partially, if we should get some knowledge of Him." (See *Pastor's Monthly*, 1932, p. 115.) Christ deals with us only through Scripture, and those who claim to hear His voice more distinctly and more effectively in visions or in their "experience" are dealing with a chimerical Christ. Standing for the principle "Not Scripture but Christ," they are rejecting the authority of Christ.

Furthermore, when they set up the principle that only those portions of Scripture are authoritative which "deal with Christ," that only the Gospel-truths are inspired, and that all the rest represents the judgment of fallible men, they repudiate the authority of Jesus. Jesus did not set up that principle. Jesus did not give them the right to go through the Bible and clear out what they consider to be the rubbish and noxious weeds. On the contrary, He expressly forbids this. He has solemnly warned all men against annulling, striking out, any statement, any word of Scripture, John 10:35. He has declared through His apostle that all

Scripture is given by inspiration. And when these men still insist that great portions of Scripture are made up of trifles and chaff and filth, they are flying in the face of Jesus and renouncing His authority.

Finally the principle "Not Scripture but Christ" renounces the authority of Christ because it involves the repudiation of the teaching of Christ. When men apply the sifting process to the Bible and accept as authoritative and profitable only that which appeals to their spiritual sense and Christlike mind and, in line with this, base their faith not on the written word of promise but on the impression which Christ in person makes upon them, they are founding their salvation upon something in themselves. That goes directly against the teaching of Christ, who bids us to trust solely in the Word; and it goes against the teaching of Christ in yet another way, against the very heart of the teaching of Christ. This is what happens, in the words of Dr. Pieper: "In so far as the consistent Reformed theologians speak of an *immediate* activity of the Holy Ghost, revealing the saving truth and effecting salvation outside of the means of grace, and the modern Lutherans would have faith founded on 'the person of Christ,' 'the historical reality of Christ,' instead of basing it solely on the forgiveness of sins, offered in the word of the Gospel, they base justification on the *gratia infusa* and find themselves, as regards the doctrine of justification, in the Romish camp" (II, p. 613). Many of them will, by the grace of God, still trust in the Gospel-promise in spite of their principle. But others are consistent, and while some of them do not come out in the open, many speak the Romish language fluently. The system drives irresistibly in the direction of salvation by the *gratia infusa*. The *opinio legis* inheres in human nature; and if a man makes his spiritual sense his guide, his choice of the Gospel-passages in Scripture and his interpretation of them will have the legalistic bias. And if he is not satisfied with the bare promise of the Gospel, he will make his experience, his spiritual impressions, his feeling of elation, and the like the basis of his hope of salvation. That is the *gratia infusa* of which Dr. Pieper speaks. And this evil leaven keeps working. Under the influence of the ingrained *opinio legis* he can in the end see nothing but ethical teachings in the Bible and cannot help putting a legalistic sense in the plainest Gospel-passages. Here are a few statements to the point—and all who say: "Not Holy Scripture but Christ!" would make similar statements if they applied their system consistently. W. Hermann: "That Jesus Christ has the power to redeem us can only mean that our present experience of the reality of his person convinces us, as nothing else does, that God will accept us. . . . The fundamental thought of Jesus' Gospel is that it is in God's rule in our

hearts that our salvation consists." (*Syst. Theol.*, p. 115.) *Gratia infusa!* Shailer Mathews, who on page 1 of his book *The Church and the Christian* rails against those who "make the Bible the sole authoritative revelation of truth" and insists on page 74 on "the centrality of Jesus," speaks up on page 73 for those "churches that seek to perform their religious function by making the example and teaching of Jesus their final moral idealism," and proclaims on page 105: "What the world requires of the churches is not a revival of fourth-century Christology but the impregnation of economic and political processes with love. Only then will Jesus have given meaning to their function. If Christians are to be interested in helping make a better world, the churches must make *theology secondary to morality embodying the spirit of Jesus.*" (Italics ours.) Miles H. Krumbine deplores the fact that in the modern world "Jesus has lost His authority. . . . Candidly, to revert to Shailer Mathews's phrase, it is the Gospel of Jesus we have wearied of." And then he states: "The one thing we know definitely about Jesus is His ethical teaching." (*Ways of Believing*, pp. 68, 71.) Ethics—that is the sum and substance of the Gospel that Jesus preached! Why does faith justify, according to R. Jelke? Not simply because the sinner appropriates the vicarious satisfaction but because "that which Christ performed is reproduced in him (the believer) potentially, ethically" ("dass sich in ihm das von Christo Geleistete potenziell, ethisch wiederholt"). (*Die Grunddogmen des Christentums*, p. 64.) J. G. Machen says on this point: "We reject as our standard what is wrongly called 'the teaching of Jesus.' . . . What is the underlying notion of those who make what they call the teaching of Jesus their authority instead of the Bible? I am afraid this question is not hard to answer. It is the notion that Jesus was primarily a teacher, that we honor Him because by His word and by His example He taught us how to practise the same type of religion as that which He practised. . . . Jesus came not just to teach us true general principles of religion and ethics but to redeem us from sin by His death upon the cross. . . . Thus we reject this notion that the teaching of Jesus as distinguished from the Bible is the seat of authority. It is profoundly dishonoring to the teaching of Jesus itself. It degrades Jesus to the level of a mere religious teacher, the founder of one of the world's religions." (*The Christian Faith in the Modern World*, p. 79 f.) Machen is speaking of extreme cases, of men who use extreme language. But all who would have Jesus take the place of Scripture and would choose out of Scripture what suits their spiritual sense, say the same in principle. Guided by their reason, they interpret what they experience or what they read in Scripture in such a way as to make Christianity a law-religion. Ostensibly

exalting the authority of Christ, they go straightly against His teaching and directly renounce His authority.

They lose everything, the Bible as the sure authority for doctrine, and Christ, as the sure foundation of faith. And as to their sneering question: Are you willing to base your faith on a mere book? we answer: We are not ashamed to go to a book, when that book brings us Christ. Luther was not ashamed of his book-religion. He thought highly of the despised "letter." "Today, too, roving spirits are clinging to the illusion and demanding that God must do something special in their case and deal with them through a special light and secret revelation in the heart and thus give the Holy Spirit, as though they needed *no letter, Scripture*, or external preaching. Therefore we must know that God has established this order: No one shall come to the knowledge of Christ nor obtain the forgiveness gained by Him or the Holy Ghost except through external means." (XI, p. 1735.) Pay no attention to their cry that this insistence on the letter and this reliance on the promise as written in Scripture can produce only a mere intellectual conviction, devoid of life, fervor, and Spirit. You know better. "When I am without the Word, do not think of it nor deal with it, no Christ is there and no zest, no spirit. But as soon as I take up a psalm or passage of Scripture, it shines and burns into the heart and puts me into a different mind and mood." (*Luther*, VIII, 749.)

TH. ENGELDER

The False Arguments for the Modern Theory of Open Questions

A Translation of Dr. C. F. W. Walther's Article Entitled "Die falschen Stuetzen der modernen Theorie von den offenen Fragen,"

Lehre und Wehre, XIV (1868)

(Continued)

The assumption of a successive origin of dogmas through so-called decisions of the Church, by which some men seek to uphold the modern theory of open questions, militates, in the second place, against the relationship existing between Scripture and Christian faith. Besides its clarity, which should enable every one to comprehend its articles of faith, and, furthermore, its power to generate faith in those articles, Scripture possesses 1) perfection or sufficiency, *i. e.*, the attribute of containing and presenting in clear and convincing words all the dogmas which one must know and believe in order to be saved; and 2) canonical, normative authority, according to which it alone decides whether a certain dogma is truly Christian or not. Scripture, in short, is the only criterion for de-

termining the Christian religion and theology, the only source of Christian truth from which we can actually draw reliable facts, the only rule and norm of all faith and life, and the supreme judge, rendering the final decision in all controversies on any points of faith.

No special proof is necessary for these statements among those who want to be true Protestants. But the Scriptural principle mentioned above is unequivocally rejected by all those modern theologians who claim that dogmas are gradually formulated and finally established by the unanimous consent and decisions of the Church. Their opinion is that, as long as the Church has not yet definitely spoken, certain dogmas cannot be considered as conclusively settled, because they are "still pending and unfinished," "still in a nascent stage," "not yet fundamental doctrines," "for the time being only private and individual points of view which in themselves may be well-founded Christian convictions and the current results of conscientious and faithful Bible-study," and consequently "differing opinions and convictions are not only unavoidable but also justified and permissible, since the question regarding their Scripturalness is still undecided." Therefore, they say, since these dogmas are still "open questions," every one must have the privilege of exercising his "permissible ecclesiastical freedom" therein, or "perhaps it would be better to exclude altogether from the Christian pulpit those points which are most in dispute."

From their point of view, then, any one has the liberty to accept or reject what God has revealed and decided in His Word as long as the Church has not yet spoken and rendered her decision; but as soon as the Church has spoken, all liberty has come to an end!

This hypothesis fills every Christian with consternation, because he not only believes that the Bible *contains* the Word of God, but that the Bible *is* the Word of God and because he clearly discerns the destructive consequences which accompany the theory under consideration. This hypothesis is also diametrically opposed to the perspicuity, power, perfection, canonicity, and authority of Holy Writ. Scripture calls itself a light, a lamp, the sure testimony of the Lord, making wise the simple, 2 Pet. 1:19; Ps. 119:105; 19:8. It declares itself to be quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, Heb. 4:12. The apostle testifies that the Holy Scriptures make one wise unto salvation and thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works, 2 Tim. 3:15-17. Scripture lays a curse upon those who add or detract anything from it, Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18, 19. God through the prophet calls to those who consult the dead: "To the Law and the Testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them," Is. 8:20. Christ causes Abraham to answer the petition of the rich

man in hell with the words "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead," Luke 16:29, 31. The apostle writes at the close of his doctrinal discussion: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God," Gal. 6:16. Scripture speaks of itself as the river of the city of God which is full of water. Ps. 46:4; 65:9.—Against all these powerful divine testimonies the theory according to which dogmas are built up gradually through decisions of the Church rises in opposition. It substitutes the Church for Scripture, man and his decision for God and the divine decision. And this substitution surrenders the foremost principle of true Protestantism and adopts the principle of the antichristian Papacy, with all its errors and abominations, as the foundation of our Church.

But thanks be to God! Our Church has definitely rejected that theory thetically and antithetically both in its public Confessions and in the private writings of its faithful servants.

Our Church, accordingly, begins her confession in the Formula of Concord with the following words: "We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with (all) teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone, as it is written, Ps. 119:105: 'Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.' And St. Paul: 'Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed,' Gal. 1:8. Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures but all of them together be subjected to them, and should not be received otherwise or further than as witnesses, [which are to show] in what manner after the time of the apostles, and at what places, this (pure) doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved." (*Trigl.*, p. 777.)—The Thorough Declaration calls Scripture "the pure, clear fountain of Israel" (*Trigl.*, p. 851).—In the Smalcald Articles the confession of our Church reads as follows: "For it will not do to frame articles of faith from the works or words of the holy Fathers. . . . The rule is: The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel." (*Trigl.*, p. 467.) These pronouncements of our Church openly and solemnly reject the theory that in addition to Scripture the Church also is a source of Christian dogmas, i. e., that certain doctrines are open questions as long as the Church has not uttered her decisive voice, but become dogmas binding upon heart and conscience when the Church has rendered her decision. If this supposition and procedure were correct, then

articles of faith would be established not only by the Word of God but also by the Church.

In the following words Luther gives expression to the voice of our Church on the right of establishing articles of faith through councils or otherwise: "The Christian Church has no power to set up any article of faith; she has never done so and will never attempt it. All articles of faith are revealed in Holy Scripture, making it unnecessary for man to add some supplements. The Christian Church has no power to decree articles of faith like a judge or a supreme authority; she has never yet done so and will never attempt it." (Article on the Power of the Christian Church, A. D. 1530, beginning with the following introductory sentence: "Dr. M. Luther, pastor of the holy church in Wittenberg, is ready to defend the following points against the whole satanic brood and all the gates of hell," XIX:958.) On the power of the Church assembled in councils Luther furthermore wrote: "In the first place, a church council has no power to set up new articles of faith, in spite of the fact that the Holy Spirit is present in the sessions. Even the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:11) established no new article of faith; St. Peter merely pointed out the fact that all their forefathers had also believed this same article — salvation alone through the grace of Christ without the works of the Law. In the second place, a Church council has the power and the duty to suppress and condemn new articles of faith according to the will of God in Holy Writ and the example of the faithful fathers." (Essay on Councils and Churches, A. D. 1539, XVI:2250.) All true servants of our Church follow Luther in this judgment. Thus Baier, one of the later servants of our Church, says: "It is manifest that the work of councils does not consist in establishing new dogmas, but in expounding, confirming, and defending the revealed dogmas in clear, idiomatic speech." (*Com. Th. Posit.*, III, 13, 31.)

Ancient councils, indeed, at times adopted the phraseology of the Apostolic Council: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts 15:28), but J. Dan. Arcularius has written correctly: "Although the words 'The Holy Spirit has passed judgment in this question,' etc., have been used repeatedly in many councils and confessions of faith, yet our Church has never used these words, neither in the Augsburg Confession nor in the Thorough Declaration; she has always cited the words of Scripture, because they are the foundation upon which her doctrine rests." (*The Unbiased Confession of Faith*, etc., 1692, p. 131 f.) Therefore Dannhauer, who refers to Arcularius on this question, expressed himself in the following manner: "Athanasius says: 'In the question concerning the celebration of Easter the Nicene Fathers did not hesitate to

add: "*We have decided [visum est]*, that all ought to submit themselves"; but in regard to faith they did not write: "We have decided"; but: "The Catholic Church believes." And therefore the deciding authority of councils is not that of a judge but that of a servant in points of faith which can be contradicted by a single Paphnutius if he teaches something on the basis of Scripture which is more correct." (*Christeis. Proth.*, p. 94.)

In like manner our Church has always consistently refused to consider the demand that it should wait for the "decision" of a council or of the Church before it accepts or rejects any point in an article of faith. Therefore Luther wrote: "This is a strong argument which disconcerts many. They know our doctrine is right and are unable to advance anything against it. Yet they stand before us like an old horse and say nothing more than: 'The holy Christian Church has not yet passed judgment upon it and approved it.' With the words 'Christian Church' they arrest the attention of both the simple-minded and the conceited. . . . 'How is this?' they say; 'the Christian Church has not yet passed her decision; Christendom has not yet spoken'; and then they wait for councils and diets, where the doctors assemble, deliberate, and draw their conclusions. As long as this procedure is not followed, they remain neutral. Now both the foolish and the 'wise' determine to wait until the Christian Church has come to some conclusion; for one man is speaking this way, another otherwise; the Christian Church is still undecided; we want to continue in the faith of our fathers until a conclusion is reached as to what is right; and then they turn up their noses at the simple-minded. We do not deny, for instance, that Jesus was to come out of Bethlehem, but for that reason we do not say that He was not to come out of Galilee, John 7:40-43. Furthermore, this also is true: Whoever is not in the Christian Church and teaches doctrines not acceptable to the Church is a false preacher through and through. . . . But when they say they desire to wait until the Church has uttered her voice, let the devil do the waiting; I shall not tarry that long. For the Christian Church has already decided everything. . . . This deciding is not accomplished through some outward assembly. There is a spiritual council, and no convention of men is necessary for that. We may hold a council to decide how we should fast and pray, how we should clothe ourselves, how articles of faith are correctly confirmed and confessed, or how other questions should be judged, as was done in the Council of Nicaea. But no council is necessary to decide whether the Christian doctrine is right. I say I accept Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar and believe that the Gospel is true and holy. Should some one reply: Well, your faith is wrong, then trouble begins. There-

fore a spiritual council is necessary that my brother may believe as I believe and preach, that all Christians everywhere may have the same faith and be united. . . . The Christian Church is not an assemblage of bishops' and cardinals' hats. Such a concourse may be or may grow into a council, but it is not the Christian Church. For the Church cannot be gathered into one locality; she is scattered throughout the whole world. She believes as I believe; and I believe as she believes. There is nothing conflicting or dissimilar in our belief. . . . Let this be your attitude: If you want to be the true Church and bear her precious name, give this proper proof thereof: teach doctrine correctly, as the holy Christian Church teaches it; live as she lives; give evidence of your faith and the fruit of faith; prove that you are the Christian Church." Luther accordingly says that a doctrine does not become certain through the decision of the Church; but when the Church passes a correct decision, then it becomes certain that she is the true Church. Christians indeed believe the Church as a ministering judge, but only as a judge that examines and confirms, not as one that hands down decrees by virtue of his office or authority. (On John 7: 40-44, VIII:97-102.)

The following words are also from Luther's pen: "A saying is the Word of God not because it is proclaimed by the Church, but because the Word of God is proclaimed, therefore there exists the Church. The Church does not create the Word, but is made through the Word. The presence of the Word of God in any locality is a sure sign of the existence of the Church in that place. So St. Paul writes in 1 Cor. 14:24, 25: . . . 'just as an unbeliever prostrates himself and confesses that God is truly present because he hears them prophesying.' Not the Church but the Word of God has moved him, whereby he has been overcome and judged." (On the Abuse of the Mass, A.D. 1521. XIX:1081.) Again, in regard to waiting for the decision of the Church Luther wrote as follows: "Who in the mean time is preaching to the Christians, while the schism is being adjusted and settled? Yes, it is easy to juggle with councils and the Fathers when one fools around with letters of the alphabet or constantly postpones a council, as has been done for the past twenty years, and has no thought for the souls that should be fed with reliable doctrine, as Christ says in John 21:6: *Pasce oves meas.*" (Article on Councils and Churches, A.D. 1539, XVI:2178.) Some indeed answer that the controverted doctrines, or "at least those points which are most in dispute, had better be excluded altogether from proclamation in the Christian pulpit." What prudent advice! What, then, "happens to the souls that one should feed with reliable doctrine?" Or has God perhaps revealed unnecessary things? Indeed, is certainty on any point

of faith an unnecessary thing when a controversy has arisen and consciences are disturbed over those points? "Good consciences," says the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, "are crying out for the truth and sound instruction from the Word of God; and for them death is not so bitter as doubt in some point of faith." (Of Confession and Satisfaction, *Trigl.*, p. 290, 32.) "But it is likely that there are many in many places who waver concerning matters of no light importance and yet do not hear such teachers as are able to heal their consciences." (*Trigl.*, p. 291, 33.) God preserve us from such a perpetual "interim" which some men would bring upon our Church today through such principles!

Just one more testimony from our beloved Luther. In the introduction to a sermon by Guettel, in 1541, he wrote as follows: "Guettel is writing against the *expectantes*, i. e., those who are waiting for a council. They may be wise and prudent people who thus wait and stake their salvation upon some human ordinance, but they are fulfilling the proverb: A wise man will not commit a small folly; or they must be entirely ignorant and inexperienced concerning the Christian faith, not being able to discern the wide difference between the Word of God and the word of man. I would, however, not fault them for this, because up to the present time the world, deceived by the Pope, was forced to believe that decrees of councils were just as valid as, yes, even more valid than, the Word of God, which (thank God) at the present time not even the ducks and the geese, the mice and the lice, among us would believe if it were possible for them to believe something. But he who does not hear anything cannot learn anything, and he who cannot or will not hear cannot or will not learn and know. Such *expectantes* we commend to the mercy of God." (XIV:392.)

Dannhauer therefore classifies the practise of the Roman Catholic Church as conservative syncretism because it permits freedom in *non decisis*, i. e., freedom in points not yet decided by the Church. Gerhard declares this practise to be skepticism. The statement of the Jesuit Dillinger "Just as in the days of the most ancient Fathers, so today in the interest of unity of faith and peace differing opinions are permissible in those points of religion which the Church has not yet defined as long as every one is ready to submit himself to the judgment of the Church" is answered by Gerhard as follows: "What absurdity! Since the Pope can establish new articles of faith, the papists can never be certain about dogmas, but must always remain skeptics. . . . According to Bellarmine's admission the Church cannot make any book canonical, but only declare it to be canonical. In like manner an opinion is heretical even when no 'decision' has confirmed it. . . . The certainty of dogmas does not depend on the judgment of the Church, but on

the divine revelation in Holy Writ, a fact which Christ and the apostles ever hold before our eyes. . . . The certainty of Holy Writ disappears if its statements must first be confirmed by the decrees of the Church. Then also all means of sound Bible interpretation which have been employed with great success by the entire Church are surrendered and cast overboard." (*Consideratio Quarund. Quaestt.*, etc. Jenae, 1631, p. 1.)

It is indeed true that our Church, together with the Roman Church, has always denied the validity of a private interpretation of Scripture, but each Church in an entirely different sense. In the Roman Church a private interpretation is that of an unofficial individual, and the correct interpretation is that which has been approved by the Church in her public decrees. But our Church considers that interpretation private which, according to 2 Pet. 1:20, rests on human reason and biased points of view; for when the apostle says "that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation" (*ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται*; Vulgate: *propria interpretatione non fit*), he does not mean to say that the official interpretation of the Church is the correct one, but rather that an interpretation is acceptable only then when it corresponds with the intention of the Holy Spirit, who inspired the holy writers. Therefore Kromayer wrote as follows: "We must give a more ready ear to a plain layman when he adduces Scripture than to a whole council which takes a stand contrary to Scripture. We must be more ready to believe Mary, the eye-witness, than the deceitful crowd of Jews. For the fact that a multitude of persons errs does not make the error right. In Ex. 23:2 God gave the command "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (*i. e.*, when it has deviated from the straight path of truth). Hence, we must pay more attention to the principle upon which a man bases his support for a certain truth than to the person speaking and writing. Even though a whole council expounded Scripture contrary to the intention of one of the holy writers, we should look upon such an exposition as a private interpretation, 2 Pet. 1:20. Consequently, mere private opinion which offers biased Bible interpretation is rejected, not the exposition of a private individual who permits Scripture to interpret itself. In the Nicene Council the contention of one man, Bishop Paphnutius, prevailed, for he defended the right of the clergy to marry, although the sentiment of the council had been against it."

May God graciously prevent that modern theology, having originated in our old fatherland, gain ground among us! Let us be on our guard against it, because it makes the validity of a doctrine as a Christian dogma depend on the decree of the Church. In doing

so, this theology has placed itself on the same level with the Roman Catholic Church.

In our next article we shall refute the position of the Dorpat theologians, who claim that "even the most well-founded Christian conviction and current result of conscientious and faithful Bible-study" cannot be considered "dogmas of the Church" before the Church has given her authoritative voice. That this distinction between Biblical and ecclesiastical dogmas is untenable will be our topic next time.

Oak Glen, Ill.

ALEX. W. C. GUEBERT, translator

(To be continued)

Kleine Prophetenstudien

In den letzten zwei Jahrgängen dieser Zeitschrift sind sechs kleine Hefestudien und ebenso viele kleine Danielstudien erschienen. Die Absicht dieser durch den Raumzwang einer Zeitschrift naturgemäß beschränkten Artikel war besonders, die Leser zum Studium dieser in mancher Hinsicht schwierigen prophetischen Bücher zu veranlassen und ihnen dabei eine kleine Handreichung zu tun; denn dies ist doch die große Hauptfache bei unsern theologischen Studien, daß wir immer besser und tiefer eindringen in die wunderbaren Schätze des ewigen Gotteswortes. Zugleich aber hatten wir dabei die Absicht, den Trägern des Amtes etwas zu dienen, wenn sie das eine oder andere Buch auch ihrer Gemeinde entweder durch Predigten oder in Bibellassen näherbringen möchten. Auch die Serie der kleinen Danielstudien hat uns ebenso wie früher diejenige über Hefekiel eine Anzahl Briefe eingetragen, aus denen hervorgeht, daß den Amtsbrüdern nicht nur für ihr Privatstudium der Heiligen Schrift, sondern gerade auch für die praktische Vertwertung ein wenig gebient worden ist. So schreibt ein Pastor, der schon über vierzig Jahre im Amte steht: „Die kleinen Danielstudien sind mir den ganzen Sommer durch den Kopf gegangen. . . . Ich habe sie nicht nur gelesen, sondern durchstudiert [und] habe fünf deutsche und vier englische Predigten über Daniel ausgearbeitet und gehalten. Eine überaus freundliche und erkenntnisreiche Frau meiner Gemeinde sagte mir kürzlich, „Herr Pastor, warum machen Sie sich solche Mühe im heißen Sommer?“ Meine Antwort lautete: „Die Leute, die im heißen Sommer zum Gottesdienst kommen, sind es wert, daß ihnen das Beste geboten wird.““ Und ein anderer Pastor, der etwa zwanzig Jahre im Amte ist und regelmäßig mit einer Bibellasse besondere biblische Studien treibt, schrieb darüber: "I like to do my own work on my Bible-class presentations, and this is just the sort of material that fits in with my plans. I am going to use this series in the fall."

Diese und ähnliche Zuschriften bewegen uns, wieder eine solche

Reihe kleiner prophetischer Studien in dieser Zeitschrift zu veröffentlichen, und unsere Wahl fällt diesmal auf einige der älteren sogenannten kleinen Propheten, nicht weil sie besondere Schwierigkeiten hätten, wie dies bei Jesaiel und Daniel der Fall ist, sondern weil sie gewissermaßen eine Gruppe bilden und sich aus ihnen die Anfänge und die Entwicklung der prophetischen Tätigkeit in Israel und ihrer von Gott zum beständigen Gebrauch und Nutzen seiner Kirche bestimmten schriftlichen Fixierung erkennen lassen. Auch diesmal gehen wir nicht hauptsächlich, sondern nur gelegentlich und nebenbei auf modernkritische Theorien und Ansichten ein. Die Hauptsache ist, daß wir diese Propheten aus ihrer Zeit heraus in dem, was sie gesagt haben, immer besser zu verstehen suchen.

Wir erörtern darum auch jetzt nicht weitläufig den Begriff eines Propheten und die Art und Weise, wie er seine Botschaft an das Volk von Gott empfangen hat. Es genüge, darauf hinzuweisen, daß ein Prophet eben ein *Sprecher* ist, ein gottbegeisterter Sprecher, ein Verkündiger des göttlichen Wortes und Willens, und zwar vor andern Leuten, mehr oder weniger öffentlich. Dies liegt schon in der etymologischen Bedeutung des hebräischen Wortes נָבִיא und des griechischen Wortes προφήτης, das dann in unsere deutsche und englische Sprache übergegangen ist und in dem das πρό nicht temporal (zuvorverkündigen) sondern lokal (vor andern verkündigen) gemeint ist. Und wir beschränken uns in dieser Artikelreihe eben auf die sogenannten *Schriftpropheten*, die eine besondere Klasse in dem Prophetentum Israels bilden. Während es nämlich immer im weiteren Sinne Propheten gegeben hat, seitdem Gott sein Wort den Menschen gesandt hat; während schon Moses mit dem Namen eines Propheten, und zwar eines großen, ja einzigartigen Propheten, bezeichnet wird, 4 Mos. 12, 6—8; 5 Mos. 18, 15—19; 34, 10—12; während seit der Zeit Samuels und mit dem Aufkommen des Königtums das prophetische Amt eine stehende Einrichtung in Israel wird, so unterscheiden wir doch von allen andern Propheten diejenigen, die mit Obadja beginnen; und wir benennen sie mit dem von Johann Gottfried Herder geprägten Ausdruck „Schriftpropheten“, weil Gott der Heilige Geist sie zum Schreiben angetrieben hat, 2 Petr. 1, 19—21; Jes. 30, 8; Jer. 30, 2; 36, 2—32, und ihre Schriften als beständiger Schatz der Kirche nicht nur für ihre eigene Zeit bestimmt waren, sondern nach Gottes Willen und Vorsehung auch auf uns gekommen sind und für uns Bedeutung haben. Ihre Schriften sind eben nicht etwa bloß, wie sie heutzutage öfters aufgefaßt werden, ein Stück Archäologie, das man wie andere Gebiete der Altertumswissenschaft erforscht, sondern sie haben unmittelbare, heilsgeschichtliche Bedeutung für uns, wie dies St. Petrus in der für die Tätigkeit und Bedeutung der Propheten so wichtigen Stelle 1 Petr. 1, 10—12 hervorhebt: „Sie haben's nicht ihnen selbst, sondern uns dargetan“, genau wörtlich: „haben es uns dienlich dargereicht“, ἡμῖν oder nach besserer Lesart: ἡμῖν διηκόνουν αὐτά, unto us they did minister the things, „haben uns

ihre Schriften und in und mit ihren Schriften jene großen Dinge, Leiden und Herrlichkeit Christi, die uns zuge dachte Gnade und Seligkeit, übermittelte".¹⁾ Dazu kommt noch, daß mit diesen Schriftpropheten eine besondere Periode in der Geschichte und Entwicklung des Gottesreiches im Alten Testament beginnt. Diese Propheten befaßten sich eben nicht nur mit den inneren Angelegenheiten des Volkes Gottes, wie Moses, Samuel, Nathan, Gad und andere taten, sondern sie ziehen auch andere Völker in den Kreis ihrer Botschaft herein, weil eben jene andern Völker in dieser Zeit in die Geschichte des Volkes Gottes treten. Wir nennen darum diese Propheten wohl auch die „völkergeschichtlichen Propheten“ und können sie namentlich auch die „heilsgeschichtlichen Propheten“ nennen, weil eben immer auch das zukünftige Heil in dem Messias und in der neutestamentlichen Kirche auf die eine oder andere Weise von ihnen verkündigt wird, bald kürzer und in dunklen Andeutungen, bald reicher und ausführlicher, so daß zum Beispiel ein Jesaja fast die alttestamentlichen Schranken abwirft, der „Evangelist des Alten Testaments“ wird und so schreibt, als hätte er an der Krippe zu Bethlehem und unter dem Kreuz auf Golgatha gestanden, Kap. 9 und 53.²⁾

1. Obadja

Der erste dieser Propheten ist nun Obadja, עֲבַדְיָהּ, das heißt, „Diener Jehovahs“, von dem wir jedoch nichts Näheres wissen, als daß er ein Judeäer war, ein Glied des Südreiches, wie aus dem Inhalt seines Buches hervorgeht, das durchweg die Situation in Juda-Jerusalem voraussetzt. Ob die Vermutung Franz Delitzsch' richtig ist, daß der Verfasser unsers Buchs identisch ist mit dem Fürsten Obadja, der im dritten Jahr des frommen Königs Josaphat mit andern in den Städten Judas das Gesetz lehrte, 2 Chron. 17, 7—9, steht dahin.³⁾ Zeitlich betrachtet, wäre es möglich, da die in dem Buche Obadjas geschilderte Situation, wie wir bald sehen werden, unter Josaphats Nachfolger, Joram, sich ereignete, 2 Chron. 21, 8—17. Doch war der Name Obadja kein seltener, eigenartiger Name; vgl. 1 Kön. 18, 3; 2 Chron. 34, 12.

Aber ehe wir an das Buch selbst herantreten, mag ein Wort gesagt werden über die Sammlung und Reihenfolge der kleinen Propheten in unsern jetzigen Bibelausgaben. Man kann wohl mit Recht sagen, daß diese Sammlung und Reihenfolge in der deutschen wie in der englischen

1) Vgl. dazu Luthers treffliche Bemerkungen in seiner berühmten „Vorrede auf die Propheten“ (XIV, 33. 34) und Stöckhardts ausgezeichnete Erklärung in seinem „Kommentar über den ersten Brief Petri“ (S. 49).

2) Der Ausdruck „Evangelist des Alten Testaments“ rührt von dem Kirchenvater Hieronymus her, der in seiner *Praefatio ad Jesaiam* sagt: „Non tam propheta dicendus est quam evangelista; ita enim universa Christi ecclesiaeque mysteria ad liquidum prosecutus est, ut non putes eum de futuris vaticinari, sed de praeteritis historiam texere.“ Zitiert von Carppov in seiner trefflichen, noch heute sehr wertvollen *Introductio ad Libros Canonicos Veteris Testamenti*, III, 95.

3) „Wann weisagte Obadja?“ Zeitschrift für die gesamte lutherische Theologie und Kirche (Rudelbach-Gueride), 12, 102.

Bibel im großen und ganzen chronologisch ist. Die sieben Propheten der assyrischen Zeit: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadja, Jona, Micha, Nahum, gehen den beiden Propheten der chaldäischen oder babylonischen Zeit, Habakuk und Jephania, voraus; und diesen folgen dann die drei Propheten der nachexilischen Zeit: Haggai, Sacharja und Maleachi. Aber doch ist die Reihenfolge nicht eine genau chronologische, sondern die Weissagungsschrift Hoseas ist wohl als die umfangreichste unter den früheren Büchern an die Spitze der Sammlung gestellt, da die zwölf kleinen Propheten im gewissen Sinne ein Buch bilden, das *δωδεκα προφητῶν*, ein Ausdruck, der in die deutsche und englische theologische Sprache übergegangen ist, das Zwölfprophetenbuch, Sir. 49, 12. Wir müssen darum, um die Entwicklung der Prophetie recht zu verfolgen, die genauere chronologische Reihenfolge festzustellen suchen. Und da steht nun Obadja, wie wir bald erkennen werden, an der Spitze, und wir finden schon in seinem kleinen Buche die Hauptgedanken der Schriftpropheten. Wir erkennen auch das hohe Alter Obadjas nicht nur an der ganz einfachen Überschrift „Dies ist das Gesicht Obadjas“ — das Kurze, Einfache ist häufig ein Anzeichen höheren Alters —, sondern auch daran, daß er eigentlich nur ein Thema behandelt. Das ganze Buch ist eine scharfe, bittere Strafrede gegen Edom und ist schon von den Juden mit einem Senfstorn verglichen worden, klein wie ein Senfstorn und scharf wie ein Senfstorn. Und auch sprachlich betrachtet, kann man wohl mit Umbreit sagen: „Die Rede des Propheten tönt wie aus Felsenklüften; sein Wort ist hart und rauh. Wir finden keine Blüte des Ausdrucks, nicht Schmuck der bildlichen Darstellung; es ist, als hätte Obadja seine Weissagung in das Gestein von Sela eingehauen.“⁴⁾

Aber warum ist diese erste prophetische Weissagungsschrift gerade gegen Edom gerichtet? Edom, von Esau, dem Bruder Jakobs, abstammend, war dadurch das Brudervolk Israels und wird ausdrücklich an fünf Stellen im Alten Testament so genannt, 5 Mos. 2, 4, 8; 23, 7; Amos 1, 11 und hier bei Obadja, V. 10. Aber Edom oder Esau oder das Haus oder das Gebirge Edoms, V. 6, 8, 9, 18, 19, 21, hat keine Brudergesinnung gegen Israel gezeigt, wie es auch trotz der Verwandtschaft mit Israel nicht die Religion des Volkes Gottes teilte. Edom war ganz und gar ein Heidenvolk, erscheint vielfach als Typus der heidnischen Weltmacht, hatte keinen Monotheismus, sondern Polytheismus, diente namentlich den drei Göttern Sada, Baal und Kausch, wie der jüdische Geschichtschreiber Josephus berichtet.⁵⁾ Und gerade in dieser Zeit, in die uns unser Buch versetzt, hatte Edom ganz und gar unbrüderlich gehandelt, und darum tritt Obadja auf mit seiner Weissagung gegen dieses Volk. Diese zerfällt ganz deutlich in drei Teile. Zuerst wird das Ge-

4) Zitiert bei E. F. Reil, *Biblischer Kommentar über die zwölf kleinen Propheten*, S. 250.

5) *Antiquitates Judaicae*, XV, 7, 9. E. König, *Die moderne Babylonisierung der Bibel*, S. 36.

richt über Edom angekündigt, V. 1—9, dann wird dieses Gericht begründet mit der schweren Verschuldung Edoms gegen sein Brudervolk Israel oder, wie es hier heißt, Jakob, V. 10—16, und endlich wird die Rettung und Wiederherstellung Judas verkündigt und mit einem Ausblick auf die messianische Zeit geschlossen, V. 17—21. Wenn der Prophet für Edom auch den Namen Theman gebraucht, V. 9, so hat dies seinen Grund darin, daß Theman ein Enkel Esaus war, 1 Mos. 36, 15, dessen Nachkommen in Idumäa wohnten, und daß, wie öfters, nach dem Bewohner das Land genannt wird, gerade wie auch Land oder Gebirge Seir nur eine andere Bezeichnung für Edom ist, weil Edom und seine Nachkommen dort wohnten, 1 Mos. 32, 3; 36, 8.

Das Buch Obadja's nennt sich ein Gesicht; denn was in diesem einen Kapitel gesagt wird, hat Jehovah dem geistlichen Sinn des Propheten zu sehen und zu vernehmen gegeben. Edom war durch seinen Hochmut verblendet. Es hielt sich in seinen hohen Felsenspitzen für unüberwindlich. „Der Hochmut deines Herzens hat dich betrogen, weil du in der Felsen Klüften wohnest, in deinen hohen Schlössern, und sprichst in deinem Herzen: Wer will mich zu Boden stoßen?“ V. 3. Aber es wird aus seinem Felsenest hinabgestürzt werden. „Wenn du denn gleich in die Höhe führest wie ein Adler und machtest dein Nest zwischen den Sternen, dennoch will ich dich von dannen herunterstürzen, spricht der Herr“, V. 4. Und Jehovah ist es, der am Tage des Gerichts Edom vom Gebirge Esau hinwegtilgen wird. „Was gilt's, spricht der Herr, ich will zur selbstigen Zeit die Weisen zu Edom zunichte machen und die Klugheit auf dem Gebirge Esau? . . . Und das Haus Jakob soll ein Feuer werden und das Haus Joseph eine Flamme, aber das Haus Esau Stroh; das werden sie anzünden und verzehren, daß dem Hause Esau nichts überbleibe; denn der Herr hat's geredet“, V. 8. 18. Es mag nebenbei bemerkt werden, daß die neuere archäologische Forschung gerade auch das, was hier von den Edomitern gesagt wird und von ihrer Wohnung in den Felsen, auf das genaueste bestätigt hat.

Aber was war die Verschuldung Edoms? Wir lesen V. 10—15 die Worte: „Um des Frevels willen, an deinem Bruder Jakob begangen. Zu der Zeit, da du wider ihn stundest, da die Fremden sein Heer gefangen wegführten und Ausländer zu seinen Toren einzogen und über Jerusalem das Los warfen, da wardest du gleich wie derselbigen einer. Darum sollst du zu allen Schanden werden und ewiglich ausgerottet sein. Du sollst nicht mehr so deine Lust sehen an deinem Bruder zur Zeit seines Elendes und sollst dich nicht freuen über die Kinder Juda zur Zeit ihres Jammers und sollst mit deinem Maul nicht so stolz reden zur Zeit ihrer Angst; du sollst nicht zum Tor meines Volks einziehen zur Zeit ihres Jammers; du sollst nicht deine Lust sehen an ihrem Anglied zur Zeit ihres Jammers; du sollst nicht wider sein Heer schiden zur Zeit seines Jammers; du sollst nicht stehen an den Wegscheid, seine Entronnenen zu morden; du sollst seine übrigen nicht verraten zur Zeit der Angst.

Denn der Tag des Herrn ist nahe über alle Heiden. Wie du getan hast, soll dir wieder geschehen; und wie du verdienst hast, so soll dir's wieder auf deinen Kopf kommen.“ Da entsteht nun sofort die Frage: Wann hat sich dies denn zugetragen? Und davon hängt dann ab die Bestimmung des Zeitalters Obadjas. Es ist bekannt, daß namentlich zwei Ansichten hier bestehen. Die eine ist, daß hier Bezug genommen werde auf die Eroberung Jerusalems durch die Chaldäer oder Babylonier unter Nebukadnezar, eine Ansicht, die Luther in seiner Vorrede auf das Buch Obadjas vertritt, auch aus andern Gründen (XIV, 84); ebenso Calov und andere Ausleger. Nun denken wir ganz mit Recht, wenn wir von einer Eroberung Jerusalems und einer Gefangennahme der Judäer hören, zunächst an die bekannte Katastrophe unter Nebukadnezar im Jahre 587 vor Christo, gerade wie wir im Neuen Testament, wenn wir von einer Zerstörung Jerusalems reden, zunächst an die Eroberung Jerusalems im Jahre 70 nach Christo durch die Römer unter Titus denken. Aber tatsächlich hat Jerusalem im Laufe der Geschichte ein Schicksal gehabt, wie es wohl keine andere Stadt der Welt erfahren hat. Es ist im ganzen nicht weniger als sechshunddreißigmal erobert worden, und darum müssen wir, wenn wir von einer Eroberung Jerusalems lesen, genauer nachforschen. Und wir sehen nun auch bald, daß hier nicht an die Eroberung durch die Babylonier gedacht werden kann; denn hier ist eben nicht von einer Zerstörung der Stadt die Rede, sondern nur von einer Eroberung, und die gefangenen Judäer werden nicht nach Babylonien geführt, nach dem Osten, sondern in eine ganz andere Gegend, nämlich nach Zarpath und Sepharad, nach dem Westen, nach dem bekannten Sarepta in Phönizien, Luk. 4, 26, und nach Kleinasien. Die Lage Sepharads war freilich lange umstritten, und manche kühne Meinungen sind vorgetragen worden; aber schon Franz Delitzsch denkt in dem genannten Artikel, S. 100, an die Jonier, ebenso König in seinem Wörterbuch. Eine zweisprachige Iydisch-aramäische Inschrift ist in neuerer Zeit in Sardis gefunden worden, die es gewiß macht, daß es Sardis = Sepharad ist, was auch durch das Joel 3, 11 (in der englischen Bibel 3, 6) von den D^{ny}, den Joniern, Griechen, Grecians, Gesagte bestätigt wird. Sellin bemerkt: „Seitdem Sepharad mehrfach in den Keilschriften der Perserzeit gefunden (als Saparda), ist anzunehmen, daß damit Kleinasien, besonders Phrygien und Lydien, gemeint ist.“⁶⁾

Aber was für eine Eroberung und Zerstreuung ist dann hier gemeint? Ohne daß wir jetzt auf andere Ansichten eingehen, läßt sich wohl sagen, daß nur ein Ereignis übrigbleibt, nämlich dasjenige, das sich unter dem König Zoram von Juda, dem Sohn Josaphats, zutrug, etwa 890 bis 887 vor Christo, also etwa 300 Jahre vor der Zerstörung unter Nebukadnezar. Dies Ereignis wird 2 Chron. 21, 16. 17 so beschrieben:

6) Das Zwölfprophetenbuch übersetzt und erklärt, S. 284.

„Der Herr erweckte wider Joram den Geist der Philister und Araber, die neben den Mohnen liegen; und zogen herauf in Juda und zerrissen sie und führten weg alle Habe, die vorhanden war im Hause des Königs, dazu seine Söhne und seine Weiber, daß ihm kein Sohn überblieb ohne Joahas, sein jüngster Sohn.“ Und je genauer man diese Sache untersucht, desto fester wird man in dieser Überzeugung, besonders wenn man auch das auf Obadja folgende Buch Joel in Betracht zieht. Unter Joram machten sich nämlich, wie wir in den beiden Geschichtsbüchern Könige und Chronika lesen, die Edomiter los von jüdischer Oberhoheit, unter der sie noch unter Josaphat, dem Vater Jorams, gestanden hatten, 2 Kön. 8, 20—22; 2 Chron. 21, 8—10. Bei dieser Erhebung Edoms wurde jedenfalls auch viel unschuldiges Blut vergossen, die öfters in der Bibel erwähnte Stadt Ribna fiel ab; und als dann der Einfall der Philister und arabischer Völkerschaften kam, hausten die Horden, die sich Jerusalems bemächtigt hatten, räuberisch und grausam. Sie plünderten den königlichen Palast, und Joel sagt, daß sie auch Gold, Silber und andere Kostbarkeiten des Tempels mit hinwegnahmen, daß sie Kinder und Frauen gefangen wegführten, daß sie innerhalb und außerhalb Jerusalems mit den gefangenen Judäern und Judäerinnen den gemeinsten Handel trieben. Sie verkauften den Jüngling um eine Bußbirne und das Mädchen um Wein, je nachdem sie der Wollust oder dem Trunke fröhen wollten. Selbst auf dem heiligen Berge Zion wurden Saufgelage gehalten, an denen die Edomiter teilnahmen; und die Gefangenen verkauften sie dann als Sklaven an die Griechen, und zwar durch die Vermittlung der Phönizier. Die Phönizier und die Jonier waren die bekannten Handelsvölker der Alten Welt, die auch Sklavenhandel trieben. Zwar gehörten die Edomiter wohl nicht selbst direkt zu den feindlichen Heereshaufen, die Jerusalem einnahmen, aber sie freuten sich über das, was diese verübten, wurden so ihre Helfershelfer und suchten so viel Gewinn als möglich aus Judas Unglück zu ziehen. Darum sagt Obadja die oben schon angeführten Worte B. 10—15 und schließt mit der Drohung: „Denn wie ihr auf meinem heiligen Berge getrunken habt, so sollen alle Heiden täglich trinken; ja, sie sollen's aussaufen und verschlingen, daß es sei, als wäre nie nichts dagewesen“, B. 16. Und Joel sagt Kap. 3, 7—11 (2—6): „Ich will alle Heiden zusammenbringen und will sie ins Tal Josaphat hinabführen und will mit ihnen daselbst rechten von wegen meines Volks und meines Erbteils Israel, das sie unter die Heiden zerstreuet und sich in mein Land geteilet und das Los um mein Volk geworfen haben, und haben die Knaben um Speise gegeben und die Mädchen um Wein verkauft und vertrunken.“ Und dann nennt der Prophet besonders Zor (Tyros) und Sidon, die bekannten phönizischen Städte, und alle Bezirke Philistäas (פלשתי, Palestine) und ruft ihnen zu: „Ihr habt mein Silber und Gold und meine schönen Kleinode genommen und in eure Kirchen gebracht; dazu habt ihr auch die Kinder Juda und die Kinder Jerusalems verkauft den Griechen, auf daß ihr sie

gar ferne von ihren Grenzen brächet.“⁷⁾ Nun verstehen wir auch den 20. Vers in Obadja. Da wird gesagt, daß die vertriebenen Juden, die unter den Kanaanitern bis gen Zarpeth und zu Sepharad sind, errettet werden sollen. Damit ist, wie schon bemerkt, ohne Zweifel Phönizien, das ist, Tyrus und Sidon, gemeint; denn Zarpeth ist dieselbe Stadt, die in der Geschichte von der Witwe zu Zarpeth erwähnt wird, und mit Sepharad ist, wie ebenfalls schon bemerkt ist, die bekannte jonische Stadt Sardis in Kleinasien gemeint. Somit können wir mit ziemlicher Gewißheit behaupten, daß Obadja der älteste Schriftprophet ist, der in dieser Zeit nach der Katastrophe unter Zoram lebte und wirkte und den nun der Geist Jehovahs ergriff, um die Kriegstrompete der Prophetie gegen das gottlose, heimtückische, schadenfrohe Edom zu blasen. Wenn wir dann den Propheten weiter lesen, so hören wir, wie er das Gericht über Edom und über die andern Feinde des Volkes Gottes ankündigt und eine Wiederherstellung Judas und Jerusalems weissagt; denn von V. 17 an schließt sich lauter Verheißung an die Gerichtsdrohung, V. 17—21.

Aber wie hat sich nun das Wort Obadjas erfüllt? Wann und wie ist Edom gestraft worden? Das zeigt die Geschichte. Wenn auch ausdrückliche, bestimmte, außerbiblische Zeugnisse über die Unterjochung der Edomiter durch Nebukadnezar fehlen, so erfahren wir doch ganz sicher aus späteren prophetischen Stellen, daß Edom durch die Babylonier verwüstet werden sollte. Jer. 49, 7—22 wird diese Weissagung Obadjas zum Teil ganz wörtlich wiederholt, weil sie sich damals zu erfüllen begann. Nach Jeremia gehörten auch die Edomiter zu den Völkern rings um Juda, die der Herr in die Hand seines Knechtes Nebukadnezar geben will und denen Jeremia den Kelch des Zornesweins aus der Hand Jehovahs reichen soll, Jer. 25, 9. 15. 21. Vgl. auch die Worte des jüngeren Zeitgenossen des Jeremia, Hesekiel, Kap. 25, 12—14. Nach Mal. 1, 3: „Ich hasse Esau und habe sein Gebirge öde gemacht und sein Erbe den Drachen zur Wüste“, hat Jehovah die Berge Esaus verwüstet, und das kann nur auf die Verödung des Landes durch die Babylonier bezogen werden. Und der Untergang der Edomiter als Volk wurde dann durch die Massabäer im zweiten Jahrhundert vor Christo angebahnt. Judas Massabäus schlug sie in den Jahren 168—161 wiederholt, wie das erste Massabäerbuch, Kap. 5, 3. 65, berichtet, ebenso auch Josephus in seinen *Antiquitates Iudaicae*. Später hat sie dann Johan-

7) Hier begegnen wir in der deutschen Bibel dem Worte „Kirche“, das in Luthers Bibelübersetzung immer nur in üblem Sinne von falschen Andachtsstätten und Götzenthäusern gebraucht wird; vgl. 2 Kön. 10, 23; 11, 18; Hesek. 7, 24; Hos. 8, 14; 10, 1; Amos 7, 9; 8, 3. Luther scheint das Wort absichtlich herabzusetzen, nennt es blind und undeutlich und liebt es nicht, leitet es ab von dem lateinischen *curia*, das auf einem Umweg über die griechische *κωρία* ins Deutsche eingebracht sei. Die Kirche trat ihm als päpstliche Kurie entgegen und daher kam wohl sein Mißtrauen. Er hat deshalb auch das neutestamentliche *ἐκκλησία* mit „Gemeinde“ übersetzt und blieb dabei, obwohl er selbst und Spätere an seiner Übersetzung änderten.

nes Hyrcanus (135—106), ebenfalls einer der Makkabäer, der Sohn des Hohenpriesters Simon, ganz und gar unterworfen und sogar zur Beschneidung und Beobachtung des mosaischen Gesetzes gezwungen. Alexander Jannäus, der Sohn des Hyrcanus, der von 106 bis 79 Hoherpriester von Judäa war, hat schließlich die letzten Edomiter unterjocht, wie wieder Josephus berichtet. So verlieren die Edomiter ihre nationale Selbständigkeit; und ihren gänzlichen Untergang fanden sie schließlich durch die Römer, wie Josephus in dem genannten Werke und in seinem Buch über den jüdischen Krieg mitteilt.⁸⁾ Die wenigen Edomiter, die etwa noch übrigblieben, verloren sich unter den Arabern, so daß, wie Obadja geweissagt hat, sie furchtbar gestraft wurden, und ihr Name vom Erdboden verschwand. „Das Haus Jakob soll ein Feuer werden und das Haus Joseph eine Flamme, aber das Haus Esau Stroh; das werden sie anzünden und verzehren, daß dem Hause Esau nichts überbleibe; denn der Herr hat's geredet“, B. 18. Edoms Sünde ist ihm buchstäblich von Juda vergolten worden nach dem ius talionis: Womit man sündigt, damit wird man gestraft, B. 15.

Aber nun die Hauptfrage: Wie hat sich die Weissagung über Juda und Jerusalem erfüllt, die Obadja am Schluß seines Buches verkündigt, die Errettung und Wiederherstellung Jerusalems? B. 17. 19. 20. 21: „Aber auf dem Berge Zion sollen noch etliche errettet werden, die sollen Heiligtum sein; und das Haus Jakob soll seine Besitztümer besitzen. . . . Und die gegen Mittag werden das Gebirge Esau und die in Gründen werden die Philister besitzen; ja sie werden das Feld Ephraims und das Feld Samaria besitzen und Benjamin das Gebirge Gilead. Und die Vertriebenen dieses Heers der Kinder Israel, so unter den Kanaanitern bis gen Zapharath sind, und die Vertriebenen der Stadt Jerusalem, die zu Sapharad sind, werden die Städte gegen Mittag besitzen. Und werden Heilande heraufliegen auf den Berg Zion, das Gebirge Esau zu richten. Also wird das Königreich des Herrn sein.“ Dies kann nur messianisch verstanden werden. Gerade wie wir schon mit dem Untergang Edoms nahe an die messianische Zeit gekommen sind, so hören wir aus andern Stellen, daß die Vernichtung Edoms von dem aus Jakob kommenden Herrscher, dem König Messias, ausgehen soll, wie schon die alte, wichtige Grundstelle vom Stern aus Jakob und vom Zepter aus Israel, 4 Mos.

8) Josephus berichtet (nach der bekannten englischen Übersetzung von William Whiston) XII, 8, 1: "So he [Judas] fell upon the Idumeans, the posterity of Esau, at Acrabattene, and slew a great many of them and took their spoils. XIII, 9, 1: "Hyrcanus took also Dora and Marissa, cities of Idumea, and subdued all the Idumeans and permitted them to stay in that country if they would circumcise their genitals and make use of the laws of the Jews; and they were so desirous of living in the country of their forefathers that they submitted to the use of circumcision and the rest of the Jewish ways of living; at which time therefore this befell them that they were hereafter no other than Jews." Weitere Belege XIII, 15, 4 und in Josephus' *De Bello Iudaico*, IV, 5, 1. 2; IV, 9, 7; V, 6, 1.

24, 18, geweissagt hat: „Edom wird er einnehmen, und Seir wird seinen Feinden unterworfen sein; Israel aber wird Sieg haben.“ Aus Amos 9, 11. 12 erfahren wir, daß dies aber erst mit der Aufrichtung der verfallenen Hütte Davids, mit der Gründung der neutestamentlichen Kirche, geschehen soll: „Zur selbigen Zeit will ich die zerfallene Hütte Davids wieder aufrichten und ihre Räden verzáunen und, was abgebrochen ist, wieder aufrichten; und will sie bauen, wie sie vorzeiten gewesen ist, auf daß sie besitzen die übrigen zu Edom und die übrigen unter allen Heiden, über welche mein Name gepredigt sein wird, spricht der Herr, der solches tut.“ Und Obadja selbst sagt uns, daß dies alles stattfinden soll bei dem Gericht Jehovahs über die Völker, V. 15. 17. Deshalb kann die Erfüllung dieses letzten Abschnitts in unserm Propheten, V. 17—21, nur der messianischen Zeit angehören, und zwar so, daß sie mit der Gründung des Reiches Christi auf Erden unter den Juden und den zu Juden gewordenen Edomitern begonnen hat, daß sie mit seiner Ausbreitung unter den Völkern fortschreitet und mit seiner schließlichen Vollendung bei der Wiederkunft unsers Herrn und Heilandes ihren Abschluß erreichen wird. Darum hat schon Luther, der Mann mit den tiefen Augen und dem großen Schriftverständnis, in seiner kleinen Vorrede über diesen kleinen Propheten ganz kurz und knapp, aber durchaus richtig gesagt: „Am Ende weisagt Obadja von Christi Reich, das solle nicht allein zu Jerusalem, sondern allenthalben sein.“ (XIV, 59.) „Unter den Heilanden (vgl. Richt. 3, 9. 15; Neh. 9, 27) ist“, wie Hengstenberg treffend bemerkt, „der Heiland schlechtlin verborgen.“⁹⁾ Gewiß, es ist noch nicht die Klarheit eines Jesaja. Es ist nur eine Andeutung des Reiches der christlichen Kirche, wenn wir das Schlußwort lesen: „Also wird das Königreich des Herrn sein.“ Aber so beginnen die Weissagungsschriften des Alten Testaments. Sie reden in alttestamentlichen Ausdrücken von der neutestamentlichen Zeit. Der Berg Zion, das ist, die eine heilige christliche Kirche, und das Königreich des Herrn ist die eine heilige Christenheit, die mit dem Neuen Testament ihren Anfang genommen hat, die durch die Jahrhunderte geht als streitende Kirche und die am Ende der Tage vollendet werden und aus einer streitenden eine triumphierende Kirche wird. So finden wir schon bei diesem ältesten und so kleinen Schriftpropheten Obadja die Grundgedanken der Prophetie, die den Lehrsatz der alten jüdischen Synagoge bestätigen: „Das Endziel aller Weissagungen der Propheten sind die Tage des Messias.“ Ganz treffend bemerkt darum Delitzsch, der in seiner früheren Zeit so ausgezeichnet auch kleine Propheten behandelt und erklärt hat, daß mit der Behandlung solcher speziellen Themata die Weissagungsliteratur begonnen hat, mit einem fliegenden Blatt gegen Edom die völkergeschichtliche Prophetie. Das ist der Übergang zu Joel und Zona. Und immer lesen wir, wie auf Sünde und Strafe schließlich Heil und Errettung folgt.

L. F.

9) Christologie des Alten Testaments, 1, 466.

Festival Address at the Academic Service

Commemorating the Centennial of the Founding of Concordia
Seminary, St. Louis, June 3, 1939

Ps. 118:23: This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

FELLOW-STUDENTS AND FELLOW-CHRISTIANS:

This text refers, in the first place, to the founding of the Church General on the Corner-stone Jesus Christ, then to the founding of any part of the true Church at any time. Thus we may apply it also to the Church that was built in this country by the Saxon immigrants.

We are not at the beginning of the celebration of this event; for already during the past year we heard and read a great deal about it. We have also heard criticisms about what has been said. It is these criticisms I wish to discuss today. While I shall touch only on such as I have heard regarding my own addresses, I nevertheless think that some objections apply also to the discourses of other speakers. The criticisms have been decidedly constructive as far as I am concerned because they have driven me to reexamine my position, restate it, and bring out facts that I had passed over intentionally or otherwise.

I

The most frequent censure was that not enough credit had been given to Martin Stephan. The tragic end of his career has induced many of the centenary speakers to pass over his achievements quickly. Still every one of them would apply the words of our text to the talents and initial activities of this man and give him credit for really bringing about the emigration. I need not describe the religious atmosphere of Saxony and Germany in general at the beginning of the last century; you all know it. Stephan exerted a telling influence toward true Christianity long before the emigration, and upon a much wider circle in Germany than that which left later. When the British Missionary Society and the British Bible Society had brought a religious revival in some parts of Germany by forming the German Christian societies, it was due to Stephan's influence together with that of Count Detlev von Einsiedel, Secretary of State in Saxony, that these German societies became independent of the Reformed English influence. (It was already at that time, just as it is now, a part of the policy of Downing Street to use the Church for spreading and maintaining the British hegemony.) Furthermore, it must be ascribed to the influence of Stephan that these societies, rather its members, separated themselves from the emotionalism and mysticism of the Moravians (of the Herrnhuter) and from the degeneration and pietism of the State Church, in short, that they were made Lu-

therans again. I ought to mention that the influence of the Moravians on our founders was not inconsiderable. According to an unpublished letter of G. H. Loeber, written to Goehring December 24, 1820, he visited one of their religious communities, that of Ebersdorf, and he is very emphatic in the praise of these people — "Es ist mir, als haette ich aus der Fremde die Heimat besucht." Was it not Stephan's influence that later set him right, as it did many others?

One instance may be cited to show how far Stephan's influence for orthodox Christianity extended. When he published his *Postille* in 1825, he had about 500 advance subscribers from all walks of life in about a hundred different places throughout Germany. How he became the spiritual adviser of some of the Saxon fathers I shall not repeat here; his guidance of them and of hundreds of other men and women must ever be to us "the Lord's doing" and "marvelous in our eyes." He certainly had the characteristics of a leader. In the first place, a leader must have a worth-while idea; in the second place, he must be able to convince others that his idea is good and to induce them to accept it. Stephan had such a talent; he succeeded in having his idea accepted, not by a group of "nitwits" but by men who themselves had the quality of leadership and by several hundred sturdy independent professionals and other laymen. He must have been equipped with other great gifts of mind and with remarkable energy. I have been acquainted with six of his descendants. I remember his son Martin, I was a lifelong friend of two of his grandsons, I had three of his great-grandsons as my pupils; if these were chips of the old block, this must have had an exceptionally fine grain.

As early as the middle of the eighteenth century German churchmen had pointed to the United States as a possible refuge and haven for the Lutheran Church. Settlements of Lutherans had already been founded in the Eastern States. To quote but one of them, Fresenius wrote in the year 1756: "Let us pray for a better planting and extending of the kingdom of God in America; let us in every way help to increase its upbuilding in order that perhaps in time this distant continent may become a refuge and salvation for the few believers when God chastises the European Christians with severe punitive justice because of their ingratitude." I do not know to what extent these and similar words influenced Stephan, but after long consideration, after eliminating Australia with the motivation that he did not care to entrust their fortunes to England, the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase was chosen as goal of the contemplated trek. We acknowledge the wisdom of Stephan's choice and gratefully praise the marvelous doing of God, who raised him up to lead the band of emigrants.

II

The next objection frequently heard is this: You give too much credit to Walther and the Saxons. I answer: No, we do not. In the leadership of Walther we see again the doings of the Lord, marvelous in our eyes. In spite of all that has been written and said we cannot realize the disillusion, the disappointment, the frantic desperation, that came over the colonists when the crozier of Stephan proved crooked and the alb spotted and the seal of the "bischoefliche Kirche zu Stephansburg" had been engraved in vain. The leading laymen, Vehse, Marbach, and others, returned to Europe, thereby intensifying the impact of the disaster. The clergymen were perplexed and helpless; they were not clear in their minds as to what was right and wrong; they were conscience-stricken; some of the ministers wanted to resign and return to Europe. Loeber, the senior after Stephan, thought he could not administer the holy office. He wrote in erring conscience pitiful confessions of sin to the Duke of Altenburg and to his former congregation and was willing to accept a call from there. The emigration was loudly declared to be the work of the devil and not of God.

Then C. F. W. Walther stepped into the breach. "That we emigrated is not the sin," he said; "we rather sinned in waiting too long." In those trying days of reconstruction he set forth with convincing clarity the right of the Christian local congregation to establish the holy ministry. He showed how to organize a church in a country the government of which did not interfere in matters of religion. For forty years I have made special studies of the history of this immigration. I have tried to see how it was possible for Walther to gain an understanding of the correct principles of church government. All factors, his antecedents and his environment, were conspiring against him. Germany did not know the proper form of church government, Stephan had sinned against it, the Roman Catholics and the Reformed churches in America had a wrong conception of it. One must admit that Vehse, Marbach, and Fischer made valuable contributions in their *Protestations-schrift* toward the clarification of this doctrine; but even here error was lurking under truth, and they themselves deserted what they thought an unseaworthy ship. There is only one solution, one explanation: God gave Walther his understanding. We marvel at His doing.

And Walther stayed at the head of the Church for fifty years. We are not giving him too much credit when we say this. We shall always acknowledge the doings of the Lord in giving him splendid collaborators. With him were eminent minds and self-sacrificing Christians who were eminently equipped intellectually and cul-

turally: Loeber, Fuerbringer, Keyl, Gruber, Schieferdecker, Buegger, Brohm; then those giants in thought and deed Wyneken and Sihler; the array of the Loehe intellectuals: Craemer, Sievers, Roebbelen, Graebner, Hattstaedt, Cloeter, and later Schaller. But you will find, if you take this matter under scrutiny, that Walther was the leader and remained the leader. Some of Loehe's men had been coached by Loehe to oppose Walther's teachings on church government. He wrote in his book *Die kirchliche Lage Bayerns*: "In a way fraught with danger they [the Missourians] often seem to emphasize principles of Luther in regard to the rights of the congregation by not only publishing words of Luther *not written for American conditions* but also their own ideas, which do not foster the love of liberty of a Christian but the American hankering after license. . . . I fear some day a rogue, basing his work on many expressions of Luther, will write a demon's tract entitled 'Luther a Democrat.'" Note the pun on demon and democrat.

Some of the men I have mentioned, fine independent characters, were over here for the express purpose of convincing Walther of the errors of his way. They valiantly defended Loehe in extended debates but were before long won by Walther. They receded from Loehe's position and stood faithfully by Walther until the end.

I wish we had time to discuss how the question of the millennium* was treated by Walther; how he won over leading men of the Buffalo Synod (Hochstetter, v. Rohr, Brand, Wollaeger); how he was "the founder of the Synodical Conference," to use the words of the Synodical Conference's *epikedeion* of Walther; and how he brought the predestination controversy to a successful end. You will not criticize me if I draw a parallel between the role he played for a lifetime and the role played by Luther in translating the Bible. Melancthon, Cruciger, Jonas, Roerer, Foerster, and Bugenhagen gave their opinion on the rendering of a word or a phrase, but Luther had the pen in his hand.

III

The third criticism I heard is this: It would be better not to make so much of the Saxon immigration just now, when we have again that far-flung propaganda against everything German and when the anti-German sentiment is overwhelming many of our fellow-citizens. But just at this time I would shout from the housetops the record of the Saxons: They rendered not only to God the things that are God's but gave to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. One of the Presidents of the United States said that the Saxon im-

* Millennialism was broadly taught by Stephan in his sermon on Ascension Day, and Loeber had a slight infection of it in his *Explanation of the Augsburg Confession*.

migration was not so well known as it deserved to be known, that a parallel between the coming of the Saxons and the advent of the Pilgrim Fathers could be drawn, and that from this small beginning a great community had developed which had contributed greatly to the material and spiritual welfare and development of our country.

The Saxons were beyond dispute culturally far above the average of the 68,000 immigrants of the year 1839. Consider, for instance, their interest in education. Even during the trip in river boats on the Elbe and on the barks sailing across the Atlantic their children received systematic instruction. This schooling was not interrupted in the first distressful months in America but was carried on while the forests were cleared and the log houses built; regular common schools were opened at once in Altenburg, St. Louis, and elsewhere. The Pilgrim Fathers who landed in 1620 had no common schools at all but enjoined upon the parents the duty of instructing their children in the three R's and the catechism and placed the same obligation upon the masters with respect to apprentices. Secondary schools they opened later, beginning with Boston in 1635 and ending with Roxbury in 1643. In the last-named year there appeared in London a pamphlet, *New England's First-fruits*, in which we read:

"After God had carried us safe to New England
and [after] we had builded our homes
Provided necessaries for our livelihood
Reared convenient places for God's worship
And settled the civil government
One of the next things we longed for
And looked after, was to advance learning
And perpetuate it to posterity
Dreading to leave an illiterate ministry
To the churches when our present ministers
Shall lie in the dust."

Not after this, that, and another thing but in as many weeks as it took those Pilgrim Fathers years the Saxons opened that log-cabin secondary school, in which a course in esthetics was given and the students recited the psalms in Hebrew. — Anent the gaging of the cultural standing of these men, one should mention their fine feeling for the beauties of language in poetry; I think they were children of the Goethe-Schiller age in this respect. The fine poems of C. F. W. Walther are best known; O. H. Walther was the most prolific and, I think, best poet; a large number of unprinted poems of his are still extant. Buenger composed Latin poems until the end of his life. Loeber wrote lyrics of delicate beauty. The first poem published in the *Lutheraner* is from him, a dialog between a wanderer and the migrating birds. I thought I might bring

it closer to the emotional understanding of the younger generation
if I would translate a few stanzas:

The Wanderer to the Migrating Birds

Now, welcome, you wanderers on air-lanes,
You hosts in formation on high;
'Way over the plains you are soaring;
Uplifted, you powerful fly.
You hasten with fast-speeding wingings
From North to South, to your home,
And bring to us colorful autumn,
Loud calling: The summer is gone.

Answer:

Yes, listen, you people beneath us,
Who understand this our call;
Swift days of your years are all flying,
The spring of your life turns to fall.
Just as in fast-speeding battalions
You now see us coming and go,
Thus passes your life in a hurry,
And, as we, you also fly so.

Wanderer:

But tell me, you travel companions,
I wondering ask of you now:
I, pilgrim upon this here earthland,
Know when and whereto I must go;
But who may you cranes be a-teaching
The straight lanes of your homeward flight,
And then when so glad you are reaching
Again us in spring's warm delight?

Birds:

We travel under His commandings
Who made us in wisdom so great
That we without your understandings
Know well how to take to our gait.
Ay, crane, turtle-dove, and the swallow
Observe their time when they should come,
But God's humans care not to follow
When He calls them back to His home.

Wanderer:

So travel, rejoicing companions,
Far South to the climate so grand.
May heavenly Father conduct us
From here to the God-promised land!
Then shall we be caught up together
In the clouds from the wide-open grave
And fly in an instant to Father
Henceforth to be with Him all safe.

These men were indeed loyal Americans. Here is an unpublished prayer written by O.H. Walther and used in Trinity

Church every Sunday during the first year after the Saxons' arrival in St. Louis:

"O Lord, heavenly Father, almighty Ruler of the universe, who lookest from Thy throne on all children of men, we pray Thee fervently, regard favorably and bless Thy servant, the President of the United States, and all in authority in our country. Fill them with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit that they may always do Thy will and walk in Thy ways. Clothe them with the abundance," etc.

These were indeed ideal citizens; they were no tax-dodgers. Some years ago I asked for a report on the criminology of Perry Co. No major crime had been committed all these years. There was no need of a jail, and the divorce courts were idle. Into the pages of history we can write that these men cannot be accused of divided loyalty, and they did not dream of making a little Germany, with Pan-Germanistic aspirations, out of a part of America. They cut loose entirely from the German civil and church government. Our ministers never exchanged pulpits with those of the State Church in Germany. The philosophy of Fichte, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche and the theology of Harnack did not hold them spellbound, while it did fill with awe many leaders of the American churches and undermined the foundations of Christianity among them. They did not grow hysterical with enthusiasm when a representative of the German reigning house came across the ocean (I am not insinuating that other nations do). Walther refused to accept the degree of D. D. from a German university. I need not tell you that Walther's Fourth of July address, delivered in one of those early years (1853), deserves a place of honor among patriotic orations; for faultless presentation of principles and lofty American sentiments it has no superior.

But why did the Saxons — if they were such good Americans — keep the German language as long as they did? They wished to give to our country men who were bilingual with all psychological and cultural advantages that such proficiency implies. They pointed to European borderlands in which the people are able to speak two languages, as is the case, for instance, in Switzerland. True, they did not amalgamate as readily with their fellow-Americans as they might have done had they given up their language sooner. A student of ethnology pointed out to me that a group of superior culture does not mix as readily as a less well-cultured group. While I would not think of saying that no groups in our country were their equal in culture, I do say that they were far above the cultural level of the average immigrant and probably above that of most Americans with whom they came in contact, for an unusually long time.

IV

But this leads us up to what is perhaps the most common criticism of the Saxon fathers, one that has been dinned into my ears many a year: Why did they not start English work sooner? Why did they preach the Gospel in German only? It never was their policy to preach in German only. One of the silliest slanders I ever heard is that our fathers said the Word of God could not be preached in English and retain its purity. They were not such shallow thinkers and not so ignorant of the universality of the pure Gospel and real Christianity. I read in notes of O. H. Walther that were jotted down not later than 1840, in which he mentions it as a most urgent desideratum that at least an excerpt from the Symbolical Books be made in the English language. In 1852 and later Synod discussed the establishing of an English college or at least an English academy in Fort Wayne and got in contact with the citizens of Fort Wayne in the matter, stating "that it was self-evident that such an institution would be needed." In 1857 guiding principles were adopted by our Synod for the founding of English congregations, and dismissal of well-indoctrinated German members to them was recommended. The reason that this advice had meager results and that not more English congregations were established is this, that our Synod did not have enough clergymen to take care of the German Protestant immigrants, whom they were best fitted to serve. In the decennium of 1850 to 1860 two million Germans came to our shores. The German Methodists, under the leadership of Nast in Cincinnati, gathered hundreds of thousands of German Lutherans into their fold, also the Evangelicals in Kentucky. Other denominations reaped a similar harvest. Even as late as the eighties some of our *Reiseprediger* had dozens of places to serve. I myself had thirty in a territory where there are now more than thirty self-sustaining congregations and as many pastors. After a year or so I received a call to an established congregation. I asked Dr. Walther's advice in the matter, and he urged me not to accept the call because our Synod *then was only beginning to catch up in its effort of providing for the tidal influx of immigrants into the frontiers*. Even in the nineties the task of the College of Presidents was a different task by far from what it is today. When they assembled, they did not have to contend with the problem of providing charges for the candidates, but of providing candidates for all the congregations and mission-stations that were to be supplied. Many a year more than one third of the congregations was eliminated from the list. — While we did not do all that might have been done, we are nevertheless justified in claiming that we did supply the spiritual needs of the German Lutheran immigrants. That has been *our historic mission*. It was the Lord's doing that our Synod provided, so to say, for its own household first.

V

Our work in the German language is now almost over. During the next century our task must be to keep with the Church those English-speaking Lutherans whose forefathers we gathered when they still spoke German, but also to gather other English-speaking people into the Lutheran Church, many of them, several millions. Can we do it?

That brings us to the next criticism, the last I shall discuss. It is said that we Missourians are laboring under a delusion if we think that our uncompromising doctrinal standpoint and our strict antilodge and antiunionistic practise can be maintained in the future. But what is the purpose of all this study of history, and why do we marvel at the Lord's doing in the past century if we now deliberately want to abandon everything that the Lord has blessed so abundantly in the past? Is history to bring a curse upon our head? Will our centenary songs stand up as witnesses against us on the Day of Judgment? What has been done in the past is not important as compared with what lies before us. If we are sincere in confessing that we see the Lord's hand in the history of the past one hundred years, we shall not lack courage to uphold the principles for which we have fought; we shall fear no obstacles, no reverses; we shall yield to no temptation; we shall be ready for every sacrifice.

What is the world's greatest need today? That is the burning question. How manifestly wrong are the answers of the average author, editor, columnist, of the philosophers and scientists of our day, of the American pulpit! Do you know what the world's greatest need is? The philosophy, the *Lebensanschauung*, the religion, which the Missouri Synod has had these hundred years and which it *has to this day*. If the ailments of the world, if the ailments of the United States, are to be healed, this is a sure remedy.

It is one of the greatest privileges of my life to stand today before this body of seminarians and to exhort you to continue in the ways of the Saxon forefathers. It would be utterly abhorrent to me if any one of you should think *we must trim our sails, we must change our course*. I cannot believe that, when our two-hundredth anniversary will be celebrated, the same fate will be recorded of us that is recorded of the Swedish Lutheran settlement on the Delaware: In 1838, 200 years after the immigration of the Swedes, only one pastor had kept even the name Lutheran. His six associates were Episcopalians; only one congregation had kept the name Lutheran. A few years later this pastor died, and the name Lutheran was dropped by his successor and his congregation. And last year, at the tercentenary of the founding of the Swedish settlement, the president of the Swedish Lutheran Seminary and

the Bishop of Sweden met in the selfsame church with the Episcopalian bishop to celebrate—what? Well, I presume the death of the Lutheran church that had occurred there a hundred years before.

We of the second and third generations, now fast passing away, stand before you and ask you to forgive us all shortcomings of our life and of our church-work; but we assure you that we have kept undefiled the great treasure delivered to us by the fathers. We entreat you, we implore you, to keep that Gospel which was delivered to you in its truth and purity and to defend it against all foes, especially against rationalism and Liberalism, to carry the torch of truth in this ever-increasing darkness, under ever-increasing demands on you, until the end, when we shall glorify *your* administration unto the body of Christ with the words, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." THEO. BUENGER

Predigtentwürfe für die Evangelien der Thomafius-Perikopenreihe

Neunter Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Matth. 14, 22—34

Welch verschiedenartige Vorstellungen und Hoffnungen vom Messias hatte doch das Volk! Von wie wenigen wurde Jesus als der rechte Messias erkannt! Das gilt heute noch. Den rechten Jesum erkennt man nur zu selten. Wie viele halten ihn für einen großen Propheten, Begleiter, Märtyrer usw., nicht aber für den Sünderheiland! Viele wollen auch nicht zugeben, daß er der rechte, der wahre Helfer sei.

Jesus ist der rechte Helfer

1. Er lehrt uns, daß das Geistliche, nicht das Irdische, die Hauptsache sei
2. Er zeigt selbst den rechten Wert des Gebets
3. Er sieht unsere Not und hilft uns

1

Jesus wollte mit seinen Jüngern allein sein, aber das Volk gab ihm keine Gelegenheit dazu, Matth. 14, 13; Mark. 6, 33. Weil er ihr Elend erkannte, hielt er ihnen eine lange Predigt („es jammerte ihn“, Mark. 6, 34). Er heilte auch ihre Kranken, Matth. 14, 14. Die Hauptsache aber war die Predigt. Das war das eine, das not ist, Luk. 10, 42. Darauf folgte die wunderbare Speisung der Fünftausend.

Das Wunder hatte auf das Volk einen gewaltigen Eindruck gemacht. Aber die so wunderbar Gespeisten gaben nun eine verkehrte

Herzensgefinnung zu erkennen. Sie wollten Jesus greifen und zum „Brotkönig“ machen, Joh. 6, 15. Ihnen war das Brot die Hauptsache. Jesus hatte seine Jünger „getrieben“, genötigt, gedrungen, übers Meer zu fahren, V. 22. Er verhinderte auch die Absicht des Volkes, indem er es „von sich ließ“ (zweimal gesagt, V. 22, 23) und „entwich“, Joh. 6, 15.

Welch eine Lektion! Auch in unserer Zeit stellen viele die ganze Sache auf den Kopf, indem sie nicht die Predigt des Evangeliums, sondern das „Brot“ zur Hauptsache machen. (Diesseitsreligion, social gospel usw.) So etwas billigt Jesus nicht. Da entweicht er. Die große Hauptaufgabe der Kirche bleibt die Predigt des Evangeliums. Jesus ist vor allem der Helfer aus geistlichem Elend.

2

V. 23. Nun war Jesus allein auf dem Berge und betete. Er hat lange gebetet („vierte Nachtwache“, V. 25). Was er in jener Nacht seinem himmlischen Vater vorgetragen hat, wird uns nicht gesagt. Sicherlich aber wird der verkehrte Sinn des Volkes ihm schwer auf dem Herzen gelegen haben. Als wahrer Mensch wollte er dies mit seinem lieben Vater besprechen. Er suchte so auch Kraft und Stärke für seine schwierige Arbeit. — Wie wichtig für uns! Unsere Anliegen gehören vor Gottes Thron, Ps. 50, 15; 77, 4; Jes. 26, 16. Beten wir so fleißig, wie wir sollten? Reden wir genug mit unserm Gott?

Jesus war allein, als er betete. So konnte er ungestört mit seinem lieben Vater reden. Auch uns gibt er die Weisung, im „Kämmerlein“ zu beten, Matth. 6, 6; Dan. 6, 10.

3

V. 24. Die Jünger waren inzwischen in Not geraten. Schon längst hätten sie am Ziel angelangt sein sollen, aber in der vierten Nachtwache mußten sie noch mit Wind und Wellen kämpfen, V. 25. — Ach, wie oft geschieht es auch heute, daß wir Not leiden müssen, daß „Wind und Wellen“ uns zuwider sind!

Dies alles war Jesu nicht verborgen, Mark. 6, 48. — Auch unsere leibliche Not sieht der Heiland. In Liebe und Fürsorge achtet er auf uns. Er kam zu seinen Jüngern. Nichts hinderte ihn. Er wandelte auf dem Meer, V. 25. — Auch uns kann er helfen, selbst wenn Hilfe unmöglich zu sein scheint. (Lied 355, 4.) Oft kommt er auf ganz wunderbare Weise zu uns.

V. 26. Die Jünger erkannten Jesum nicht. Sie hielten ihn für ein Gespenst. Anstatt sich über sein Kommen zu freuen, schrien sie vor Furcht. — Wie oft geschieht es, daß auch wir Jesu Gegenwart und Hilfe nicht erkennen!

V. 27. Jesus tröstete seine Jünger, besonders indem er sich ihnen zu erkennen gab. Nun wollte Petrus auch auf dem Wasser gehen, V. 28; auf Jesu Befehl tat er es auch, V. 29. Jedoch er fing an zu sinken.

Warum? Infolge feines Kleinglaubens, V. 31, und weil er auf die Wellen achtete und nicht auf Jesu Wort. Wie oft wiederholt sich das in unserm Leben! Nur wenn wir auf Jesu Wort achten und darauf trauen, sind wir stark. — Petrus schrie: „Herr, hilf mir!“ Jesus erhörte die Bitte des Kleingläubigen, V. 31. 32. So läßt Jesus auch uns manchmal sinken, aber nicht ertrinken. Er beweist große Geduld mit uns in unserer Schwachheit.

Welch einen gewaltigen Eindruck dies auf die Jünger machte und auch auf uns machen sollte, V. 33. J. W. Behnen

39ter Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Matth. 23, 34—39

Wie das altkirchliche Evangelium des heutigen Sonntags, so offenbart auch unser Text die Fülle der Erbarmung des Weltheilandes, deckt die ungeheure Schuld der Menschheit auf, zeigt in erschütternder Weise den Ernst der Heiligkeit und Gerechtigkeit des Weltrichters.

Jesu Klage über das ungläubige Jerusalem

1. Er hält den Einwohnern noch einmal die Größe seiner Gnade vor
2. Er deckt die Größe ihrer Schuld auf
3. Er weißsagt ihnen das Gericht

1

Es ist nicht eine Klage über Heiden, die nie Gottes Wort gehört haben. Was Jesu Herz um so wehmüthvoller stimmt, ist die Tatsache, daß es ein hochbegnadetes Volk ist, über das er klagen muß. Wie oft hatte er das Volk versammeln wollen! Er, der Lehrer von Gott kommen, Joh. 3, 2, wahrhaftig, Matth. 22, 16, dessen Veredsamkeit auf Freund und Feind gewaltigen Eindruck machte, Luk. 4, 22; Matth. 7, 28. 29; Joh. 7, 45. 46; der Gottessohn, dessen Wundermacht allgemein anerkannt wurde, Joh. 7, 31; 11, 47. 48, dieser Jesus verkündigte den Frieden, Apost. 10, 36—38. Welche Gnade!

Mit welcher Treue suchte er sie! „Wie eine Henne“ usw., V. 37. Wie freundlich und herzlich lockt er sie doch, V. 39! Wie ernstlich hält er ihnen noch einmal vor, ehe er sie verläßt, daß sie nur dann ihn als ihren Heiland sehen und an seiner Herrlichkeit teilnehmen werden, wenn sie in wahrem Glauben sprechen: „Gelobet sei“ usw.

Noch mehr. Er sendet ihnen Propheten usw., V. 34. Das waren die Apostel, Lehrer, Prediger, Evangelisten, die das ganze Land durchzogen und ihnen noch einmal Frieden predigten.

Gleiche Gnade haben wir empfangen. Jesus selbst redet zu uns in der Schrift. Wie oft lockt er uns! Mit welcher Treue geht er uns nach! Welch eine Fülle von Predigern und Lehrern hat unsere Synode

gehabt und hat sie noch, die Gottes Wort in voller Reinheit verkündigen: Walthar, Wynken, Fürbringer usw.!

Daß die Juden so große Gnade empfangen hatten, hielt Jesus nicht ab, in bittere Klage auszubrechen. Muß er etwa auch über uns klagen?

2

„Ihr habt nicht gewollt!“ B. 37. Die so hoch begnadeten Juden wollten nicht hören, nicht glauben. Weder Jesu Gesetzespredigt noch sein Evangelium war nach ihrem Geschmack. Wohl beschuldigten sie Jesum der Lüge, Joh. 8, 52; Matth. 27, 63; wohl warfen sie seinen Anhängern Unwissenheit vor, Joh. 7, 48. 49; Apost. 4, 13; aber es war nicht ihr Verstand, sondern ihr Wille, der sie abhielt, zu Jesu zu kommen, seiner Predigt zu glauben. Sie konnten es nicht leugnen, daß das, was er ihnen predigte, die Wahrheit sei, Joh. 8, 45. 46; 11, 45—53; Apost. 4, 14; 5, 28. Aber sie waren zu tief versunken in Selbstgerechtigkeit und Heuchelei. Sie konnten nicht widerstehen dem Geist und der Weisheit eines Stephanus, Apost. 6, 9. 10, eines Paulus, Apost. 9, 22; 17, 18. 19. Das waren Leute, die es mit den Weisen dieser Welt aufnehmen, die alle ihre Gründe widerlegen konnten, die wirklich Weise waren, die aber ihre Weisheit, die Schärfe ihres Verstandes, ihre herrlichen natürlichen Geistesgaben in den Dienst Christi, seines Wortes, seiner Kirche stellten. Das wollten die Feinde nicht tun; sie wollten nicht ihre Vernunft gefangennehmen unter den Gehorsam des Glaubens; sie verhärteten sich gegen das Wort, verfolgten, verspotteten, steinigten, töteten die zu ihnen Gesandten.

Noch heute verachten viele selbst in der äußeren Christenheit Gottes Wort, sein Gesetz, sein Evangelium. Man spottet über Bibelgläubige, man sieht sie über die Schulter an, man wirft ihnen Mangel an wissenschaftlicher Bildung vor. Man vergißt, daß auch unter den Christen viele Weise und Gelehrte sind, daß es nicht sowohl am Verstand als am Willen liegt, daß man sich nicht unter Gottes Wort beugen, den Sünderheiland nicht annehmen will.

Wie steht es bei uns? Schätzen wir Gottes Wort und Gnade, wie es sich gebührt? Wieviel Selbstgerechtigkeit, Heuchelei, Weisheitsdünkel, Sündendienst, Weltliebe usw. findet sich unter uns! Röm. 2, 4. Prüfen wir uns! Tun wir Buße, damit uns nicht das Gericht treffe!

3

B. 38. Ihr Tempel, ihre Stadt, das ganze Gebäude ihrer stolzen Selbstgerechtigkeit, ihres fleischlichen Hochens auf ihre Vorrechte wird in den Staub dahinsinken. Es soll über sie kommen alles unschuldig vergossene Blut, B. 35. 36. Es soll ihnen gehen nach ihrem eigenen Gesetz, 2 Mos. 21, 24. 25. Bis auf den heutigen Tag erfüllt sich dies Gericht, werden die Juden verachtet und verfolgt. Und das schrecklichste Gericht ist das Gericht der Verstockung, der Verwerfung, 2 Thess. 2, 14—16. Nicht als ob sie von Ewigkeit zur Verdammnis ausersehen wären. Todt

sie doch Jesus noch, B. 39. Siehe auch Röm. 11, 25. Ihre Verachtung des Heilandes und seines Wortes ist allein schuld daran.

Ähnliche Gerichte sind nach Gottes Heiligkeit über noch andere Verächter seines Evangeliums ergangen: die Kirchen Kleinasiens, Nordafrikas, im Lande der Reformation, in andern Ländern Europas, die die furchtbaren Folgen des Weltkrieges zu leiden haben, der als Strafe ihres Unglaubens gesandt worden ist, die protestantische Kirche unsers Landes, die von Gottes Wort immer weiter abgewichen ist und nun vom seelenverderblichen Modernismus durchseucht ist. Unserer Synode wird es nicht besser ergehen, wenn sie nicht festhält an Christo und seinem Wort. Allein da ist Heil und Seligkeit zu finden. Wer nicht glaubt, wird verdammt, Mark. 16, 16; Hof. 13, 9. Laßt uns dies Heil nicht mutwillig verschmerzen!

L h. Lättsch

Elfter Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Matth. 16, 13—20

Der nach menschlicher Vernunft ungleiche Kampf zwischen David und Goliath zeigt uns, daß nicht menschliche Kraft und Kunst den Ausschlag geben. Der junge David, ungenügend ausgerüstet, besiegt den riesenstarken, schwerbewaffneten Goliath, weil Gott mit ihm war. Daher konnte der Hirte später auch noch König werden. Goliath war verloren, weil er den wahren Gott verachtete. In dieser Geschichte ist abgebildet, was aus einem Menschen wird, je nachdem er mit Christo oder wider ihn ist. Christus ist gemacht zu einem Fall und Aufstehen vieler. Das wird im Texte gezeigt.

Wie wichtig es ist, daß wir die rechte Stellung zu Christo einnehmen

1. Wer Christum nicht für Gottes Sohn und der Welt Heiland hält, ist verloren
2. Wer sich wie Petrus zu ihm bekennt, ist ein seliger Mensch

1

a. B. 13, 14. Die Leute waren verschiedener Meinung; die einen dachten dies, die andern das von Christo. Aber im Grunde waren sie sich einig. Sie hielten Jesus nicht für Gottes Sohn und der Welt Heiland, sondern wohl für einen großen Propheten, aber doch nur für einen Menschen, der nicht gekommen sei, der Welt Heiland zu sein, sondern nur zu lehren, nur den Weg zu weisen.

Jene Leute hatten dieselbe Meinung von Christo, wie viele sie heute noch haben. Selbst in den meisten Kirchen ist diese Meinung zur Herrschaft gelangt: Modernismus, Leugnung der Gottheit Christi, Verwerfung der stellvertretenden Genugtuung, Seligwerden durch eigene Werke usw. Diese Stellung ist nicht schriftgemäß.

b. Was hat das aber für eine Folge für sie? Hier nicht direkt gesagt, aber leicht zu schließen, B. 17. Petrus wird selig gepriesen, weil

er Jesum als Gottes Sohn und der Welt Heiland bekennt. Demnach sind die andern unselige Menschen. Sie haben keine Hoffnung. Sie stehen nicht auf dem Fundament, das den Weltuntergang überdauert. Die Pforten der Hölle werden sie überwältigen. Sie sind in der Gewalt des Teufels; der führt sie gefangen, wohin er will („in Irthum sich verberbet“). Nur einer kann sie retten; aber den wollen sie nicht. Daher ist alle ihre Arbeit vergeblich, all ihr Predigen umsonst. Sie hoffen, auf ihre Weise in den Himmel zu kommen; aber sie werden damit zuschanden werden. Denn wer Jesum nicht bekennt als den Sohn Gottes und der Welt Heiland, der ist verloren. Wie wichtig daher, daß wir die rechte Stellung zu Christo einnehmen! Nur dann sind wir selige Menschen.

2

a. B. 15. 16. Was Petrus bekennt, ist das Bekenntnis aller Christen. Petri Bekenntnis sagt nichts anderes, als was wir in der Erklärung des zweiten Artikels unsers Glaubens bekennen. B. 17 bestätigt Jesus, daß solch ein Bekenntnis das rechte ist. Dazu sind wir nicht durch ein größeres Maß von Klugheit gekommen, sondern das ist Gnadengabe Gottes. Die Folge ist: „Selig bist du.“ Wer solche Stellung zu Christo einnimmt, der ist ein seliger Mensch. Warum?

b. B. 18. Er ist dann sicher. Er steht auf einem ewig festen Fundament. Jeder Gläubige ist durch den Glauben an Jesum, den Sohn Gottes und Heiland der Welt, mit dem Sieger über Tod, Teufel und Hölle verbunden. Jesu Sieg ist dann sein Sieg. Seine Seligkeit ist gesichert, 1 Kor. 1, 30.

B. 19. Er ist aber auch darum ein seliger Mensch, weil er eine herrliche Aufgabe hat. Er hat den Schlüssel zum Himmelreich. Wenn er dem unbußfertigen Sünder mit Gottes Zorn droht, so schließt er die Tür zum Himmel. Und was er sagt, hat göttliche Autorität. Wenn er dem bußfertigen Sünder das Evangelium von der Erlösung durch Jesum Christum predigt, so öffnet er die Tür zum Himmel. Und auch das hat göttliche Autorität. Daher sollen die Christen auch mit nimmermüdem Eifer dieses hohe Vorrecht gebrauchen zum Heile vieler Menschen. Sie sind Heilande ihrer Mitmenschen. Sind wir nicht selige Menschen?

Freilich, der Herr legte den Jüngern damals noch Schweigen auf. Die Stunde, da sie öffentlich auftreten sollten, war noch nicht gekommen, B. 20.

Gott sei Dank, daß er unsere liebe Kirche nun schon hundert Jahre bei dieser Stellung zu Christo erhalten hat. Wir trösten uns noch immer damit, daß Jesus Christus, wahrer Gott und Mensch, unser Erlöser ist. Wir wollen darum auch eifriger werden, dieses in der Welt zu bezeugen. Einst werden wir dann als Sieger in den Himmel einziehen.

Wie wichtig daher, daß wir die rechte Stellung zu Christo einnehmen, daß wir ihn nämlich wie Petrus für Gottes Sohn und der Welt Heiland halten! Tuft du es auch? S. J. Vroman

Zwölfter Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Matth. 13, 31—35

Jeder gute Redner gebraucht Beispiele, Gleichnisse, Geschichten aus dem Leben. Gute Redner tun das nicht nur, um das Interesse der Zuhörer von neuem zu wecken, sondern besonders zu dem Zweck, etwas klarer und verständlicher zu machen, um eine bestimmte Lehre den Zuhörern tiefer einzuprägen. Wir haben schon alle beobachtet, wie die Aufmerksamkeit der Zuhörer durch ein passendes Beispiel geweckt wurde und wie sie dann bereit waren, von neuem dem Redner oder Prediger zu folgen.

Niemand verstand das besser als der Heiland. In seinen Predigten, wenn er öffentlich oder privatim redete, gebrauchte er gar häufig Gleichnisse, Geschichten aus dem Leben. Er fand immer neue Vergleichspunkte. Er führte seine Zuhörer hinaus in Wald und Flur, auf die Berge und aufs Meer, in den Garten und in die Häuser, ja sogar in die Küche. Er tut dies besonders in unserm Textkapitel. Vgl. B. 34. 35. Gerade bei dieser Gelegenheit gebraucht er ein Gleichnis nach dem andern. Dies war geheißen worden, Ps. 78, 2. In den zwei Gleichnissen unseers Textes beschreibt der Heiland

Das herrliche Wachstum des Reiches Gottes

1. Sein äußeres Wachstum
2. Sein inneres Wachstum

1

a. B. 31. 32. Der Heiland redet hier von einem Senfstorn. Das Senfstorn war den Juden sprichwörtlich für etwas Kleines, Geringes, Unansehnliches. Dieser Redeweise bedient sich Jesus hier, ohne damit sagen zu wollen, daß es keine kleineren Samenkörner gebe. Man vergleiche z. B. Matth. 17, 20; Luk. 17, 6. Wenn aber ein Senfstörnlein in die Erde gesät wurde, ging es bald auf und wuchs schnell heran. Es kam oft vor, daß es zu einem baumartigen Strauch aufwuchs, so hoch wie ein Reiter zu Pferd, so daß die Vögel des Himmels sich auf die Zweige setzen konnten, um Schutz vor dem Wetter und auch Speise (Samenkörner) zu finden.

b. Mit einem solch geringen, kleinen Senfstorn vergleicht der Heiland seine Kirche, das Himmelreich, B. 31. Er weist darauf hin, daß seine Kirche auch klein anfängt. Das Evangelium wird gesät, der Same des Wortes wird ausgestreut. Es ist guter Same, er geht auch auf, aber der Anfang ist oft gering. Doch die Kirche wächst, breitet sich aus, wird größer und stärker und bietet allen denen Schutz und Speise, die sich in sie hineinschlüchten.

c. Die Erfahrung bestätigt die Wahrheit des Wortes Christi. Wie klein und gering fing doch seine Kirche an! Joh. 1, 36—42. Johannes

und Andreas. Sie bringen ihre Brüder. Bald find es zwölf Apostel. Dann finden wir 120 Jünger, später 500, 1 Kor. 15, 6. Am Pfingstfest find es schon 3,000, bald darauf 5,000, Apost. 4, 4. Der Apostel Paulus bringt das Evangelium nach Kleinasien, Griechenland, Mazedonien, und bald ist die ganze Welt damit erfüllt. Schon Tertullian (ca. 200 n. Chr.) konnte einem römischen Kaiser schreiben: „Wir find nur seit gestern, aber wir haben alles erfüllt, eure Städte, Inseln, Burgen, Paläste, ja sogar das Forum. Wir haben euch nichts gelassen als eure Tempel. Es find mehr Christen in einer einzigen Provinz als Soldaten in allen euren Armeen.“ Man denke an die Reformationszeit und an das Wachstum der Kirche in den Tagen Luthers. Man denke an unsere eigene Synode. Vor hundert Jahren etwa 600 Sachsen, bald 6,000 in der Missouri-synode, dann 600,000 und jetzt mehr als 1,300,000. Das Senfkor ist gewachsen. Geradeso ist es schon in mancher Gemeinde gegangen. Erst war es ein kleiner Predigtplatz, dann wurde eine Missionsgemeinde gegründet, und diese wuchs dann zu einer blühenden Gemeinde heran.

d. Dies Gleichnis des Heilandes ist uns zur Lehre und zum Trost gegeben worden. Wir lernen daraus, daß der Anfang der Kirche, einer Gemeinde, oft sehr klein ist. Daran sollen wir uns nicht stoßen. Uns zum Trost zeigt der Heiland, daß seine Kirche und die einzelnen Gemeinden oft nur langsam an Gliederzahl zunehmen. Ja, an manchen Orten kommt es überhaupt nie zu großem Wachstum; die Gemeinde bleibt äußerlich klein. Aber solange Jes. 55, 10. 11 wahr ist, so lange können wir auch sicherlich auf Wachstum hoffen, äußerlich und innerlich. Denn der Heiland redet in unserm Text nicht nur von äußerem Wachstum; im zweiten Gleichnis redet er besonders von dem mehr verborgenen, aber sehr nötigen inneren Wachstum der Kirche.

2

a. B. 33. Christus redet hier von Sauerteig. Die Schrift gebraucht diesen Ausdruck gewöhnlich im bösen Sinn, 1 Kor. 5, 6. 7; Gal. 5, 9. Hier im guten Sinn. Ein wenig Sauerteig ins Mehl, in den Teig, gemischt, durchsäuert bald den ganzen Teig, wie jede Hausfrau das weiß. Wie nun der Sauerteig die Kraft hat, einen Klumpen Teig zu durchsäuern, so hat das Evangelium die Kraft, das Herz, die Seele, das ganze Wesen eines Menschen, ja einer ganzen Anzahl von Menschen zu durchdringen und zu erneuern.

b. Das Evangelium hat schon viele Menschen so beeinflusst. Paulus, Augustinus, Luther, Balthar. Wohl ist das innere Wachstum nicht immer so in die Augen fallend wie oft das äußere. „Das Reich Gottes ist inwendig in euch“, Luk. 17, 21. Aber es ist da, wo das Evangelium gepredigt wird, Kol. 3, 11; 2 Petr. 3, 18.

c. Wie steht es mit dir? Hat das Evangelium dich schon durchdrungen und erneuert? Lebst du anders als die Weltmenschen? Denkst du anders als die Kinder der Finsternis? Zeigst du dein Christentum in

deinem Wandel? Wie steht es mit unserer Gemeinde? üben wir einen guten Einfluß aus auf die ganze Umgegend? Wenn Streit und Zwietracht, Parteiwesen usw. in der Gemeinde herrschen, wenn Glieder nicht nach Gottes Wort handeln, dann merkt die Welt dies bald. Wie steht es mit uns als Synode? Hundert Jahre lang hat der Sauerteig des göttlichen Wortes seine Kraft im Leben und Wandel unserer Gemeinden bewiesen. Wird dies auch im nächsten Jahrhundert der Fall sein? Joh. 8, 31. 32. Nur wenn wir am Wort festhalten, nur wenn wir diesen reinigenden göttlichen Sauerteig alles durchdringen lassen, werden wir auch in der Zukunft Gott und seinem Reiche dienen, wie wir in der Vergangenheit ihm gedient haben. Das gebe Gott aus Gnaden! Amen.

E. R. R o s c h e

Miscellanea

What's Wrong with Gambling?

Gambling is contrary to the spirit of brotherhood because it is motivated by covetousness, the desire for that which is our brother's. As Herbert Spencer says: "It is a kind of action by which pleasure is obtained at the cost of pain to another." The fact that it is the result of mutual agreement does not change the principle. The loser gives us what he has lost, not from any love of the winner, but because he took a chance in the hope of winning something; it is a sort of reciprocal covetousness; each wants something from the other without paying for it, and they enter into an agreement to decide by chance whose covetous desire shall be gratified. Two wrong motives do not make a right act. It is the very opposite of a gift; our Lord said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive"; but no gambler ever said: "It is more blessed to lose than to win." There can be no gambling between men who truly love each other; they cannot take from each other, they cannot seek pleasure at the cost of pain to another nor covet each other's money. They would rather share than gamble.

Gambling is thus a form of stealing; for it is seeking to get something from another without paying for it in goods or service. It is stealing by mutual agreement, but it is still stealing, and it proceeds from the same motive. Dueling is murder by mutual agreement, but the whole world recognizes that it is not less truly murder. So gambling is not less truly stealing because it is by mutual agreement.

Gambling is also a sin against God because it is contrary to the spirit of stewardship. It is contrary to the principle of the stewardship of money. The gambler says: "My money is mine to do with as I like; if I want to gamble it away, that's my affair." But a man's money is not his; it is God's, and he is only the trustee. He may not do with it as he likes; he must use it in a constructive, brotherly way and to God's glory. Some day he will be brought to account for his use of that money. It is common to read of a bank cashier or some other per-

son in a place of financial trust "borrowing" the funds committed to him to gamble in the hope of recouping previous losses. That is a scandalous misuse of the money of others, a scandalous abuse of stewardship. But every gamble is just as truly an abuse of stewardship; it is misusing that which belongs to God.

But it is a deeper sin than that; for gambling is contrary to the principle of the stewardship of life. The stewardship of life means that each man has a service to render society, under God, and as he renders that service is entitled to a return from society for the provision of his needs. "From every man according to his ability, to every man according to his need." But no man is entitled to a return from society except as he contributes, according to his ability, to the sum total of social wealth, material and spiritual. Gambling runs directly counter to this basic principle. It is an attempt to get a return from society without making any contribution. It is a desire to get "something for nothing," and that desire is not only folly, it is sin.

It may seem a little silly to apply these principles to "pitching pennies." But principles apply in small things as well as in great. If it is wrong to gamble with large sums, it is wrong to gamble with pennies. We see that clearly enough in stealing. The boy who "snitches" an apple from the grocery store may protest, "Aw, nobody'll miss it!" And that is true enough, but it is stealing just the same. So that fact that no one will lose very much "pitching pennies" must not be allowed to obscure the more important fact that it is gambling and contrary to the principles of brotherhood and stewardship.

It may be objected that a great deal of business violates, in spirit, these same principles. Many a man is in business seeking to take business away from another man, seeking profit in such a way that it will mean loss to his competitors. He is in business, not as a "public servant," but frankly to make money; he is not concerned with the question of whether he is rendering society a service which warrants the profit he is making. The "profit motive," divorced from brotherhood and stewardship and service, is only too prominent in modern business. But this does not justify gambling; it condemns that spirit of business. If our condemnation of gambling strikes a blow at some kinds of business, we must not "pull our punches"; what's wrong is wrong, whether public opinion justifies it or not.

If gambling is sin, as we have seen that it is, then Christians must avoid it with all circumspectness. Above all, churches and Christian organizations must avoid money-raising schemes which involve in any way the element of gambling. When the Church has cleaned up its own yard and Christians have clear moral convictions on the subject, then we can attack with greater liberty the plague of gambling in society.

REV. BANES ANDERSON, in the *Presbyterian*

Joshua 11:13

Dr. G. Ernest Wright, editor of the *Biblical Archeologist*, offers the following interesting information on this verse:

"The King James Version of Josh. 11:13 reads as follows: 'But as for

the cities that stood still in their strength (marginal reading: on their heap), Israel burned none of them save Hazor only.' The Hebrew word here translated 'strength' is one of the oldest words in the human language. It is *tell* and means a mound made up of the ruins of many cities, long since destroyed. The Joshua passage therefore would best be translated: 'the cities that stood on their *tells*,' that is, on the mounds made up of ruins which were centuries in accumulating. Not only does the word *tell* exist today in modern Arabic with the same meaning, but it existed long before the days of the Israelites in Babylonia. As early as 2000 B.C. there were deserted mounds in Babylonia, made up of the ruins of many cities long since disappeared.

"It is scarcely surprising that the translators of the Authorized Version did not understand what this word means (the Revised Version translates it correctly); for a *tell* is a phenomenon of Western Asia, appearing nowhere else. In its most typical form a *tell* is a truncated cone, the sides of which are kept regular by the stumps of old city walls still remaining in them. One city was destroyed; another was erected out of its ruins, and thus a little higher up than the last; and so on. The description of Ai in Josh. 8:28 is therefore an eloquent one: 'And Joshua burned Ai and made it a *tell* forever, even a desolation unto this day.'" (Vol. II, No. 1, p. 12.)*

P. E. K.

* It is interesting to note that Luther translated, in chap. 11:13: "Doch verbrannten die Kinder Israel keine Staedte, die auf Huegeln stunden."



Theological Observer — ദിനപത്രം: ദൈവശാസ്ത്രം

Making Plans for the Lutheran World Convention in 1940.—From the *Lutheran* we learn that Dr. Knubel, president of the U. L. C. A., and Dr. Ralph H. Long, secretary of the National Lutheran Council, went to Europe to attend a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Convention. The other members of this committee are Erling Eidem, Archbishop of the Church of Sweden, Bishops Marahrens and Meiser of Hanover and Bavaria, respectively, and Alfred T. Jorgensen of Copenhagen. Dr. Hans Lilje is the executive secretary of this committee.

The World Convention is to meet in Philadelphia, May 24 to June 2 next year. The *Lutheran* writes: "Unless the basis of representation is larger than at previous Lutheran World Conventions, the number of official delegates will not exceed 175. But Lutheran church organizations in twenty-seven countries are eligible to send delegates." If all unionistic features could be eliminated, this World Convention might be welcomed as an important agency in bringing about doctrinal agreement in the Lutheran Church. A.

The Federal Council Planning a World-State.—This is the comment of Ernest Gordon, able commentator of religious and ecclesiastical movements, whose interesting paragraphs appear from time to time in the *Sunday-school Times*. In a recent issue (May 20) he writes: "At the Madras International Missionary Council the German delegates set themselves squarely in opposition to the light-hearted Americans with their social programs. 'If any of the present panaceas offered to man are realized, it will not be the kingdom of God. We should not become easily optimistic, thinking that material development here and social progress there are necessarily the coming of the Kingdom. We should emphasize the words of the Creed 'He shall come again to judge the quick and the dead,' and believe that only this eschatological attitude can save the Church from being secularized.' (This is the suggestion of the Germans at Madras.) A paper submitted by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America to the Madras Conference may explain the German protest. It proposed plans for a *world society of nations*. 'The Christian forces of the world, having solemnly pronounced judgment upon unqualified national sovereignty, as they did at Oxford, should next declare that there must be a world authority, to which alone the necessary aspects and degrees of sovereignty can be ceded by nations. . . . It may be objected that to propose the limitation of national sovereignty is futile because it is the very basis of the present world order. But this should not discourage Christians. The Christian Church has a world view and an inclusive concern for all peoples. It is therefore incumbent upon it to define the kind of order which is essential to the welfare of the world. . . . By resolutely advocating the world commonwealth of nations, . . . the Church can meet an unprecedented opportunity and fulfil a grave responsibility.' (This is the proposal of the Federal Council.) Last year at Utrecht the Federal Council was planning a

world-church; this year in Madras it planned a *world-state*. 'My kingdom is not of this world' evidently has no admonition for it."

Gordon's verdict is strikingly correct and in full accord with the Augustana, which writes on this point: "Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth." (Cf. Art. 28, 12 ff.; *Triglote*, p. 85.) Today the Calvinistic church group is just as eager "to break into the office of the State" as is Romanism, and it is our duty to proclaim the truth to both these erring sects.

J. T. M.

The World Council of Churches.—New York (RNS).—Thirty-six churches from 19 nations of the world have officially joined the World Council of Churches, according to latest reports from headquarters of the council in Geneva. The complete list follows:

Australia: Presbyterian Church of Australia; Canada: Church of England in Canada, United Church of Canada; China: Church of Christ in China; Czechoslovakia: Evangelical Church of Bohemian Brethren; Estonia: Evangelical Lutheran Church, Orthodox Church in Estonia; Finland: Evangelical Lutheran Church; France: Reformed Church of France, Reformed Church of Alsace and of Lorraine; Germany: Old Catholic Church of Germany; Great Britain: Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, the Salvation Army; Holland: Old Catholic Church of Holland; India: Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India, Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar; Latvia: Orthodox Church in Latvia; Lithuania: Reformed Church of Lithuania; Netherlands East Indies: Protestant Church of the Netherlands East Indies; Poland: Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian Confession, United Evangelical Church, Polish National Catholic Church; Sweden: Church of Sweden; Switzerland: Old Catholic Church of Switzerland; United States of America: Congregational and Christian Churches; International Convention of the Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Church, United Lutheran Church in America, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Polish National Catholic Church of America, Rumanian Orthodox Episcopate in America, Evangelical and Reformed Church, Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Presbyterian Church in the United States, Syrian Antiochian Church of North America; Yugoslavia: Old Catholic Church of Yugoslavia. — *The Living Church*, June 21, 1939.

A New Mission in Belgium.—Pastor F. Kreiss, in *Le Luthérien Français*, under the heading "Une Mission Luthérienne en Belgique," reports a new mission opening for our small Lutheran Church in France in the neighboring country of Belgium, which is almost 100 per cent. Roman Catholic, since here, four hundred years ago, the cause of the Reformation was tyrannically suppressed. Nevertheless, in this country there now exists a small group of evangelical Christians who through their minister have appealed to our Pastor Kreiss in Paris for instruction

in the Lutheran doctrine. During the World War Mr. L. Hellings accidentally (?) secured a copy of the Gospel according to St. John. He read it eagerly and soon found that he could not be a stanch Romanist and yet accept John's gospel. The Word of God so impressed him that he discontinued attending the Catholic services even when, after the War, he had returned home to his mother, who sharply rebuked him for not going to church with her. One Sunday, when again his mother and sisters had left for church and he for a long walk in his native town, he saw a book lying on the ground. Picking it up, he discovered that it was the New Testament. He took the book home, and now his mother and sisters joined him in his Bible-study, the final upshot of which was that they, too, turned away from the Roman Catholic Church. The little group that gathered around them in the course of time met with the American Methodists but were not satisfied with their services and religious tenets. Then hearing of our Lutheran work in Paris, Mr. Hellings wrote a long letter to Pastor Kreiss, asking him for more detailed information on Lutheranism, of which he had heard in the course of his religious research. In closing his letter to Pastor Kreiss, he said: "For five years I have now carried on my work as missionary in Antwerp (Anvers), where by the grace of God I was able to gather a small congregation, faithful and very promising, and walking alone and independently on the way of evangelical truth. Belgian Christians find it hard to accustom themselves to the worship of the Calvinistic sects because these lay so little stress on the holy Sacraments. I myself have always felt the coldness and emptiness which resulted therefrom. Also, we have taken care in our small congregation at Antwerp to continue in the teachings of the Gospel, which we proclaim simply and in all its purity, and in the administration of the Sacraments as our Savior gave them to His Church. Consequently even outwardly our way of celebrating divine services is closely related — it was so even when we knew nothing of the Lutheran Church — to the Church with which we have now become acquainted and which we hope to join."

If Pastor Hellings will join our Lutheran Church, a new country in Europe can be added to the number of those in which we now proclaim "God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure." Let us include also this new mission in Belgium in our intercessions, as Pastor Hellings asks us to do when he writes: "We ask our brethren to pray for us that the Savior may grant us strength to continue the work begun in His name."

J. T. M.

Concomitance. — Dr. B. Ivins, Bishop of Milwaukee (Episcopalian), finds that "the subject of the use of the common cup in Holy Communion has become a grave one owing to local health regulations." Moreover, "a new fad or fashion of some women of today has presented the matter in a new and disgusting and revolting manner. I refer to the custom of women painting their lips." The Bishop of Milwaukee is not in favor of intinction. But he has found a remedy. "It seems to me therefore that there is but one further method to consider, and that is the withdrawal of the chalice from the laity and to communicate them under the one species of bread only." And in his pastoral address, published in the *Living Church* of June 7, he justifies this method of getting

rid of the common cup. "Are we, then, ready to break with these Scriptural and Anglican traditions and teachings? Are we being compelled to break with them? And if we are, then let me give you, briefly and sketchily, some theological and philosophical considerations. First, some pure logic and philosophy." Before reading on, let the reader take up Luther's *Bericht an einen guten Freund von beider Gestalt des Sakraments, auf des Bischofs zu Meissen Mandat* (19, 1344 ff.) and see what comes of mixing "pure logic" with theology. "Das Allerfeinste aber in des Bischofs Zettel ist, dass die Pfarrherren sollen das Volk lehren, wie unter der *einen* Gestalt der ganze Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn, Gott und Mensch, dazu sein Leib und Blut sei. . . . Hiezu schlaegt nun die Konkomitanz, das ist, die Folge. Weil Christi Leib nicht ohne Blut ist, so folgt daraus, dass sein Blut nicht ohne die Seele ist; daraus folgt, dass seine Seele nicht ohne die Gottheit ist; . . . daraus folgt, dass, wer das Sakrament (auch einerlei Gestalt) isst, der frisst den Bischof zu Meissen mit seinem Mandat und Zettel. . . ." You will have to read the whole section. Then you will be prepared to read what the Bishop of Milwaukee has to say on concomitance. Here it is:

"Now, it is axiomatic: Wherever is the body of a living man, there must also be his soul. And our Lord Jesus Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more and is alive forevermore. *Ergo*. Wherever the body of Christ is, there is also the soul of Christ. Also, the sacred humanity of our blessed Lord has not, nor ever has had, any personal existence except as united to His divinity. The person of God the Son assumed a human body and a human soul. *Ergo*. Wherever the body or soul of Jesus Christ is, there is also the person of God the Son.

"Another axiom: *One* thing cannot be *two* different things at the same time. And the presence of that which makes a thing constitutes the presence of the thing. Now, that which constitutes the body of Christ is the substance of human flesh which He took of the Virgin Mary, His mother. *Ergo*. The presence of the substance of the flesh of Christ constitutes the presence of His body.

"Yet another axiom: Wherever the body of a living man is, there also are his bones and all things pertaining to the perfection of his nature. These points are the very foundation principles of the Incarnation, and to deny them places one beyond the pale of Christianity.

"Now apply these principles to the matter in hand. If any presence of Christ under the forms of bread and wine is acknowledged, it follows that, as by the power of consecration the body of Christ is present under the form of bread, there is present also His human soul. This is the theological doctrine of *concomitance*. And where the sacred humanity is present, there also is present the divine person of God the Son. Moreover, it follows that this presence is *substantial* and that the consecrated bread is, as we say in the catechism, the 'sign,' while the reality, or 'thing,' there present is the body of Christ. (*Sacramentum* and *Res Sacramenti*.) So, too, with regard to the sacred blood. But *as our Lord is living, one part of His human nature cannot be present without the rest. Ergo, the whole Christ*, body and soul and divinity, is present under each kind in the Sacrament—the body by the words of consecration and the rest by concomitance, etc. This doctrine of concomitance lays

down the premise that the body and blood of Christ, although once separated in death, are no more separable and therefore are not to be separated from each other by the Sacrament. Furthermore, Christ is wholly and indivisibly present in His human and divine natures in each of the consecrated species and in every several particle of each. Such a definition may seem excessively logical and exact in view of the mysteriousness of the subject, but I believe it to be indisputable and necessary to our consideration.

"Let us, then, understand that, while reception of Holy Communion in one kind, that is, in the case before us, of the bread alone, does in some way and to some degree mutilate the Sacrament, yet under either form alone the recipient does partake of the whole Christ and therefore makes a valid and satisfying Communion."

The Bishop of Milwaukee is as serious about this matter as the Bishop of Meissen was, only not quite so autocratic. "I do not propose to give the clergy any further direction in this matter, nor do I impose anything I have said upon any conscience, but I do submit it to the consideration of you all, clergy and laity, and unless and until either our own General Convention or the Lambeth Conference shall take further action in the matter, I will not question the practise in any cure within this diocese where the chalice may be withdrawn from the laity if it is done with acquiescence of a clear and responsible majority of them. . . . If Communion in one kind is adopted as the parish use and some still wish to receive in both kinds, provision should be made to meet the wishes of those individuals." E.

"Why We are Opposed to Methodist Union."—Under this heading the *Christian Beacon* (May 25) publishes the protest of dissenting Methodists, whose objections to the Methodist Union consummated in Kansas City remained unheard. Among other things we read in their protest: "Bishop Francis J. McConnell, in his book *The Christlike God*, has this to say concerning Christ as God: 'Is not this tendency to deify Jesus more heathen than Christian?' In other words, he declares that, if we think of Christ as God, then we are heathen in our thinking."—"Further, in the same book, Bishop McConnell says: 'Back in the early ages of the Church there were some, probably only a few thinkers, who taught that Satan had a claim on the souls of men which only the death of the Son of God could satisfy, and that God met the obligation by sending the Son to the cross. As an intellectual construction this theory arouses only amused pity today, but its aim is as self-evident as that of any other theory of atonement ever built, namely, to declare that God Himself will do whatever is necessary for the salvation of men.' Bishop McConnell avers that the Scriptural doctrine of the cross only arouses amused pity; but the Bible very clearly teaches that the cross was necessary."—"Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, one of the new bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was so popular that he was elected bishop on the first ballot. Bishop Holt has stated that the blood Gospel of Jesus Christ was outmoded."—"Bishop Holt also has stated that the work being done by that great missionary organization the China Inland Mission 'could not reach modern China.' That means that the preaching of the faithful missionaries under the direction of that great missionary

organization is worthless to modern China. Yet thousands upon thousands of Chinese have been saved through the work of these missionaries."—"Bishop Holt advocates a world church, and this is his set-up: 'First, the Protestant churches must unite. Then this great Protestant Church will meet with the Greek Catholic Church and unite; and lastly this great body will meet with the Roman Catholic Church and work out a plan for a World Christian Church.' Think of it! It would be a world church, but not Christian."—"Rev. E. Stanley Jones, held up by many as one of the outstanding Christian leaders of our day and no doubt a leader in the New Methodist Church, says in his book *The Choice before Us* that he 'believes in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man,' which the Bible rejects. In the same book he says of atheistic and godless Russia, 'I am persuaded that the Russian experiment is going to help, and I was about to say, to force Christianity to rediscover the meaning of the kingdom of God upon earth.' That means: Atheistic Russia, with all its godlessness, is going to show the Christian Church how really to interpret Christianity."—"Kagawa, a man from Japan, has been eulogized by all of these church-leaders, and his writings have been accepted by them. Kagawa sets aside the blood of Christ as a sin-cleansing agent. He says: 'Not that physical blood can redeem the sins of the soul, but to love other men enough to be willing to pour out your blood for them, that is the acme of spiritual love.' In effect, he states that the blood of Jesus Christ is not necessary to salvation."—The protest closes with the paragraph: "We could continue to pile up evidence of the apostasy that will be brought to the New Methodist Church by these leaders; but this is sufficient. Reviewing the evidence above helps us to state our reason why we are opposed to the Methodist Union as follows: Because of the apostasy and unbelief of these leaders of the Methodist Episcopal Church and their acceptance of the beliefs of such men as Kagawa, we are taking our stand against the Methodist Union." What an accursed thing Modernism is, is again proved both by these quotations from modernistic writers and by the tyranny which its leaders exercise over all who refuse to accept its false teachings. And, let us not forget, the open gate to Modernism is unionism.

J. T. M.

Constitution Sunday.—The attention of the *Lutheran* has been called to a joint resolution introduced into the Congress of the United States by which the Sunday preceding September 17 would receive a special civic place in the calendar. The bill was offered in the Upper House by Senator Davis of Pennsylvania. It reads:

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Sunday immediately preceding September 17 of each year is hereby designated and shall hereafter be known as Constitution Sunday, to be held in grateful remembrance for the privileges enjoyed under the Constitution of the United States, and the President is authorized and requested to issue annually a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such Constitution Sunday in an appropriate manner."

That the Christian citizens of the United States are open to the calls of their Government and willing that the churches should manifest their

loyalty and interest "in the powers that be" goes without saying. We accept the revealed principle that "the powers that be are ordained of God," and we recognize in the officers of state and nation and in the institutions of our Government those who have the rule over us. We deem the relationship of Church and State that is established in the Republic by the Bill of Rights among the most essential for the continuance of the liberty we enjoy. We consider so highly providential as to be properly a reason for devout thanks to almighty God the Constitution's careful balancing of civil and ecclesiastical authority, so that the Christian citizen can serve both Church and State and be served by both impartially without entanglements of his loyalty. And because the relationships are so essential, we must scan critically *any* legislation proposed.

First of all, the wording of a bill should be as nearly free from ambiguity in meaning as the English language permits. The draft of the bill quoted above is faulty in that it proposes that a certain Sunday is to be held in grateful remembrance. We assume that the subject of grateful remembrance is the Constitution, but it is not so stated. The concluding words, "in an appropriate manner," are also ambiguous. When is a manner of observance "appropriate"? For example, the President annually issues a proclamation which declares the last Thursday in November to be a national holiday to be devoted to thanksgiving. Originally it was to God that the thanks were directed. In recent years the object of devotion is very obscurely recognized. Also, in these days of shifting theories of government one is justified in asking for quite definite specifications for presidential proclamations that are issued to the churches. It is reported that the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States has agreed upon the injection of certain distinctively partisan issues into the celebration of Labor Day by members of that communion. We knew of the project for a Constitution Sunday before we read of the Roman Catholic proposition. Is there involved in this designation of days in September an application of David Harum's version of the Golden Rule — "Do unto your neighbor as he would do unto you, and do it first"? And if so, who was first? We do not hesitate to inject here our personal belief that this latest "act of isolation" on the part of the Catholic hierarchy is loaded with possibilities of danger to American industrial and economic unity. Labor Day is not by its nature of a character and purpose that lend themselves to either hierarchical or evangelical partisanship. We believe both a protest and counteraction must follow action by any minority of the country that subjects any national holy day to sectarian domination. — *The Lutheran*.

The Temple of Religion at the New York World's Fair. — On the last Sunday in April the Temple of Religion at the New York World's Fair was "dedicated" to the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Of this the *Christian Beacon* (May 4) writes: "Prominent leaders of the Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant faiths united in expounding on the fatherhood of God. . . . The meeting closed in warm support of the theory of the brotherhood of man." — "Differences of ritual and ceremony were soon sunk in a 'program,' the common theme becoming the 'belief in a God.' Traditional differences of church decorum also were

soon abandoned." Of the unchristian prayers delivered on the occasion we quote parts to show the extreme syncretism and rank idolatry practised by unbelieving Jews and denying Christians. Said Rev. J. I. Blair Larned, Suffragan Bishop of the Episcopal Church: "In these days, so prone to the peril of shallow thinking, lead us, we pray Thee, step by step, up Thy holy hill, wherein, lifted above the storms of intolerance, the clouds of prejudice, and the mists of passion, we may think Thine own thoughts after Thee." Said Wm. Church Osborn, president of the Temple of Religion: "Here we affirm that the eternal verities of faith and freedom are right in control of our lives. Here the leaders of the three religious faiths most largely practised in this country invite in developing an ideal." Said Grover Whalen: "Catholics, Jews, and Protestants have come forward in providing the temple and its gardens. Surely this edifice is a sign that doctrines of hate need not prevail in the world, and that, removed from fear, we may work together with increased vigor for the happier moments and finer things of life." Said Rabbi David De Sola Pool: "Religion must not divide. It must unite us. Here in this Temple of Religion men and women of different creeds but of one religious spirit shall meet in full, free, frank fellowship of the spirit, renouncing racialism, learning to love the Lord, our God, with all our soul and all our mind, and learning to love our neighbor as ourselves. This Temple of Religion leads our minds to the recognition that man's only glory is his understanding of God." Said the Rev. Dr. R. W. Searle, general secretary of the Greater New York Federation of Churches: "To have built three temples, twenty or a hundred chapels, would have been to symbolize a past darkened with human pride and sinful with religious strife. But we are saying with united voice that there is one God and that it is His will that men should live in brotherhood." Said Mgr. John J. Clarke, dean of the Catholic clergy of Queens: "I want to congratulate the Fair authorities for their eventual decision to erect this monument as a common profession of faith in the existence of a God. Our presence here this morning is to my mind an indication that we believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth."—The syncretistic religion glorified at the dedication of this Temple of Religion is that of Freemasonry and represents the total denial of all fundamentals that Christianity teaches. J. T. M.

Sir W. M. Ramsay Deceased.—New Testament students will learn with regret that Sir W. M. Ramsay died, eighty-eight years old. As he himself said, when he started out on his career as a classical scholar making researches in Asia Minor, he accepted the views sponsored by negative higher critics. By and by he was confronted with evidences which showed him that one of the critics' prime assumptions, the unreliability of the Book of Acts, was utterly wrong. Though not arriving at the conviction of the inerrancy of the Scriptures, he vigorously defended the trustworthiness of St. Luke's writings. His immense learning in the field of Latin and Greek literature, coupled with fearless devotion to what he believed to be true, made the works in which he defended the Sacred Record valuable additions to exegetical and apologetic literature. His searching investigation into the problem of the census taken

at the time when our Savior was born has probably done more to silence those attacking Luke 2:1,2 than the work of any other scholar during the last sixty years. The titles of some of his works are: *The Church in the Roman Empire* (1897), *Was Christ Born in Bethlehem?* (1899), *Pictures from the Apostolic Church* (1910), *Luke the Physician* (1908), *St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen* (1895), *The Letters to the Seven Churches* (1905), *The Cities of St. Paul*. A.

A Business Man Prepares to Enter the Ministry.—The following, having originally appeared in the *Watchman-Examiner*, is too good not to pass on. "C. Daniel Boone, a prominent young Chicago banker and a great-great-grandson of the famous pioneer, recently closed his desk, resigned his business connections, and prepared to enter the Episcopal ministry. He is a graduate of the University of Chicago. In taking this step, he said, 'I feel I can render a better service to my fellow-man by proclaiming the unsearchable riches of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is, after all, the great business in life.' We are desirous of drawing attention to this incident because Mr. Boone had become established in the business world and also because he speaks as a representative of business men when he says, 'I find beneath the surface of business life a deep spiritual longing. Men know they are not finding what satisfies. They are spiritually starving, and they want the broadening of life. I believe the return to religion is the only thing which will save democracy. It provides the incentive for justice and brotherhood on which alone any free civilization can be built.'" Whether one can say that, in order to save democracy, there must be a return to religion we doubt. In general, however, the statement of Mr. Boone is cheering. A.

Brief Items.—Next fall will see a new associate professor at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, Dr. John Knox, elected to serve in the Department of Preaching. During the past school-year he was associate professor of New Testament at Hartford Theological Seminary. He is a dyed-in-the-wool Modernist.

The successor of the late Cardinal Hayes as Archbishop of New York is Mgr. Francis Joseph Spellman, hitherto Auxiliary Bishop of Boston. According to the *Christian Century* the *Catholic Directory* for 1939 states that the Roman Catholic Church in the United States numbers 21,000,000 members, 33,000 priests, 18,000 parishes, 133 bishops.

It will be recalled that last December the Baptist churches in Rumania were ordered closed. Now the church press reports that these churches are to be, or have been, reopened.

From the *Lutheran Companion* we see that in the Scandinavian countries church authorities are thinking of admitting women to the holy ministry. In Denmark a woman who has finished a course in theology has received a call as assistant pastor. Norway has decided to ordain women. Sweden, it is thought, will sooner or later take the same course. The editor of the *Lutheran Companion* calls the ordaining of women a moot question and says he is rather inclined to "question the advisability of such a step." We wish he would have taken the position of Paul and said that such a procedure has to be opposed. A.

Book Review — Literatur

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Das Buch der Führung. Kap. 36—50 des ersten Buches Mose. Für Freunde und Verächter der Bibel ausgelegt von Mag. Helmut Frey. 1939. Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart. 232 Seiten 5¼×8¾. Preis: RM. 4.00.

Bezeichnend für den Inhalt dieses Buches, das auf das „Buch der Anfänge“ desselben Verfassers folgt, ist schon die Widmung „Für Freunde und Verächter der Bibel ausgelegt“. Bezeichnend ist auch die Vermerkung in der Einführung zum Buch, daß der „Widerstand des einst historisch-kritisch eingestellten Verfassers an der Macht der Schrift zerbrochen ist“. Der Grundgedanke des Verfassers, in Exegese und Ausführung, ergibt sich aus seiner eigenen Darlegung: „Charakteristisch für ‚Das Buch der Führung‘ ist, daß darin — deutlicher vielleicht als in einem andern Teil der Bibel — die Handlung in ihren historischen Linien durchsichtig wird für ewige Linien der Reichsgottespolitik, daß in den Schicksalen der handelnden und leidenden Personen urbildhaft die Wege Christi und seiner Gemeinde und ihr Kampf hervortreten.“ (S. 10.) Es will uns scheinen, daß in bezug auf den letzten Punkt die Anwendung des Verfassers manchmal allegorisierend ist; aber es ist trotzdem klar, daß das Buch durchweg von dem Standpunkt eines bibelgläubigen Gelehrten aus geschrieben ist, und zwar eines Gelehrten, der auf Grund des Urtextes seine Exegese bietet. Jeder Abschnitt wird mit einer wörtlichen Übersetzung eröffnet, an die sich eine kurze Erklärung anschließt. Die „theologische Befinnung“ bietet die Anwendung des Verfassers, und hier können wir ihm öfter nicht folgen. Besonders wichtig ist die Abhandlung über **schiloh** in Gen. 49, daß der Verfasser mit „der Ruhevolle“ übersetzt. Er nimmt dabei voll und ganz die messianische Deutung der Stelle an. Jeder Pastor, der sich überhaupt noch mit Exegese beschäftigt, und besonders jeder, der noch auf Grund des Urtextes intensive Studien treibt, wird in diesem Buche eine Fülle wertvollen Materials finden.

B. C. K r e h m a n n

Das erste Samuelisbuch. Von Hans Asmussen. Chr.-Kaiser-Verlag, München. 174 Seiten 6×9. Preis: RM. 3.70. Kartoniert.

Asmussens Auslegung des ersten Samuelisbuchs kann unsern Pastoren warm empfohlen werden, wenn wir auch nicht allen Ausführungen des Verfassers beistimmen. Über die Methode seiner Auslegung schreibt der Verfasser in seinem Vorwort die folgenden beherzigenswerten Worte: „Es ist eine in der Christenheit seit alters gelübte Erkenntnis, die meines Wissens nie so klar wie in der Reformationszeit ausgesprochen worden ist, daß die Heilige Schrift selbst der Weg zu ihr ist; denn sie legt sich selbst aus. Nicht die Vorderständnisse, die wir von ihr haben können, sind entscheidend, sondern das ist entscheidend, ob wir bereit sind, auf die Heilige Schrift zu hören und sie zu fragen, was sie uns zu erzählen hat und welches Ziel sie wohl damit verfolgt. Denn darüber kann ja nur sie selbst authentisch Auskunft erteilen. Aus diesem Grunde liegt so viel daran, daß der Wortlaut der Schrift in seinem einfältigen Verstande genommen wird. Die nächsten Generationen in der Kirche werden davon leben oder daran sterben, ob Prediger oder Hörer des Wortes da sind, die sich zunächst einfach damit zufrieden geben, auf die Schrift zu hören.“ (S. 7.)

Leider befolgt der Verfasser nicht immer seinen Grundsatz, so wenn er S. 84 von einer wirklichen Möglichkeit des Falles bei Jesu Versuchung redet. Auch ist 1 Sam. 14, 36 nicht von einer Einmischung des Priesters die Rede. (S. 91.) Asmussen hat auch kein Recht, die Weissagung Samuels, seiner Schüler und Sauls mit Raserei zu identifizieren. (S. 127.) Er redet von einer Macht, die nach dem Wortlaute des Textes jener andern Macht nahe verwandt sein muß, die Saul jeweils zur Raserei bringt. (18, 10.) Das Wertwürdige ist, daß sie hier als die Macht erscheint, welche von Samuel und seinen Genossen Besitz ergriffen hat: Samuel weisagt (raßt) an der Spitze einer Prophetenschar, die ebenso wie er im Zustande der Weissagung (der Raserei) sich befindet. Zu dieser Auslegung gibt der Wortlaut dem Verfasser durchaus kein Recht, ebenso wenig wie Gesenius-Buhl in seinem Wörterbuch das Recht hat, als zweite Bedeutung des Hitpael von רָסַס, „rasen“, aufzuführen. Als einzige Belegstelle führt Gesenius 1 Sam. 18, 10 an und vergleicht Jer. 29, 26; aber weder die Tatsache, daß Saul weisagte, 1 Sam. 18, 10, noch daß Propheten und Verrückte auf gleiche Stufe gestellt werden, Jer. 29, 26, beweist, daß weisagen jemals rasen heißt. Daß der gottlose Saul weisagte, kommt von demselben Gott, der durch den gottlosen Raiphas prophezeite, und in Jer. 29, 26 ist es ein Feind des von Gott gesandten Propheten Jeremias, der Propheten und Verrückte zusammenstellt. Sind etwa rechtschaffene christliche Prediger unserer Zeit Verrückte, Verbummende, bloß weil sie von den Feinden Christi so betitelt werden? Uns wundert diese Identifizierung Asmussens um so mehr, als er gleich im nächsten Satz schreibt: „Was hier eigentlich geschieht, wird nicht näher gesagt. Der Leser unserer Tage ahnt es nicht einmal.“ Also der Wortlaut des Textes berechtigt nicht zu dieser Identifizierung. Doch halten uns die Mängel des Buches nicht ab, es als wirklich anregendes und in den reichen Inhalt dieses nicht allzuoft behandelten Buches der Heiligen Schrift einführendes Werk unsern Lesern zu empfehlen.

E. h. L ä t j c h

Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians by Martin Luther.

A new abridged translation by Theodore Graebner, D.D., Professor of Philosophy and New Testament Interpretation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 282 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.95.

What evangelical Christian will not rejoice when he hears that Luther's *Commentary on Galatians* is now available in a modern, very readable version? Since articles dealing with this classic of Luther have not long ago appeared in the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, it is not necessary for us to dwell on the historical circumstances and the influence of this great work. From the preface we ought to take over nevertheless these introductory remarks: This epistle was his favorite among all the Biblical books. In his 'Table Talks' the saying is recorded: 'The Epistle to the Galatians is my epistle. To it I am, as it were, in wedlock. It is my Katherine.' Much later, when a friend of his was preparing an edition of all his Latin works, he remarked to his home circle: 'If I had my way about it, they would republish only those of my books which have doctrine, my Galatians, for instance.' The lectures which are preserved in the work herewith submitted to the American public were delivered in 1531. They were taken down by John Roerer,

who held something of a deanship at Wittenberg University and who was one of Luther's aids in the translation of the Bible. Roerer took down Luther's lectures, and this manuscript has been preserved to the present day, in a copy which contains also additions by Veit Dietrich and by Cruciger, friends of Roerer's, who with him attended Luther's lectures. In other words, these three men took down the lectures which Luther addressed to his students in the course of Galatians, and Roerer prepared the manuscript for the printer. A German translation by Justus Menius appeared in the Wittenberg edition of Luther's writings, published in 1539."

Scholars are agreed that among the epistles of St. Paul Galatians holds a very prominent place. In saying this, we, of course, do not wish to imply that this book is inspired in a higher degree than the other epistles of the apostle; we merely wish to say that on account of the topic treated in it and its elaboration the letter is peculiarly important. St. Paul here defends, in words burning with indignation against false teachers and at the same time aglow with the deepest love for his spiritual children that have been misled, the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, the very doctrine through the triumphant preaching and defense of which Luther inaugurated the reformation of the Church. Luther's comments on this work, coming as they do from a heart which had passed through the severest struggles and had found peace in the message of St. Paul, are the best human means we have of taking the student into the very depths of the apostle's thought and explaining his message to him.

Luther is not easy to translate. His speech is so individualistic that one often despairs of being able to give an adequate rendering. A mistake which is frequently made is too close adherence to the letter of the original, with the result that the version is awkward, clumsy, unidiomatic in its English, and difficult to understand. Whoever translates Luther should make up his mind not to be slavishly literal and thus spoil the book for the reader by a poor English style. The version before us makes good reading, we are happy to say. The sentences are short, the English is fluent, and one has no difficulty in apprehending the meaning. One more word of explanation is necessary. The translation before us does not give us Luther's entire commentary, which in the Weidman edition fills 733 octavo pages. The translator had to make a selection. He omitted sentences which contained mere repetitions or not absolutely necessary amplifications, thus greatly reducing the size of the work and adding to its usefulness for the ordinary reader. The preface states that Dr. Graebner had the very material assistance of Pastor Mahler of Geneva, N. Y., in the preparation of this volume. W. ARNDT

Karl Barth's Idea of Revelation. By P. H. Monsma, Th. B., Ph. D. Somerset Press, Inc., Somerville, N. J. 218 pages, 6½×9¼.

In view of the fact that many ministers are now becoming interested in the study of Barthianism, we suggest to them (especially to beginners) this fine presentation of the fundamental Barthian concept, viz., that of *revelation*. The Barthian idea of revelation is his premise; everything

else is only corollary. There are in the main three reasons why we prefer Monsma's excellent monograph to other works on Barth. In the first place, it confines itself to one topic but treats that basic and expansive topic thoroughly. In the second place, Dr. Monsma personally attended Barth's *Dogmatische Sozietaet* during the winter semester of 1933—1934; besides, he was enabled to study Dr. Istvan Joeroek's (Hungarian) biographical sketch of his teacher, containing material largely obtained at first hand from Barth himself, and so he came into close contact with the famous dialectician. For Dr. Barth the author shows a strong feeling of personal affection and esteem; his dialectic theology, however, he severely condemns as at variance with historic Calvinism. Dr. Monsma himself studied at Calvin College (Grand Rapids), Michigan University (philosophy), Calvin Seminary (theology), Princeton Seminary (theology), Bonn University (theology), and Columbia University, where he obtained his Ph.D. in philosophy and *Religionsgeschichte*. His work is divided into three parts, the first showing the "origin and development of Barth's theology (100 pages)," the second, "Barth's idea of revelation (64 pages)," and the third, a "résumé and critique" (28 pages), while the remainder of the book is devoted to the extensive "References" and "Bibliography." In the third place, Dr. Monsma really tries to make Barth intelligible to the average readers, employing simple, lucid language and proceeding in short, easy stages to the climax of his monograph. As a help for beginners it surpasses anything which so far has been written on Barth in our country. Barth's *Werdegang* via his own father, theologian Fritz Barth (*Die Hauptprobleme des Lebens Jesu*, surrendering vital parts of the Christian faith), Schlatter, Ritschl, Harnack, Herrmann, Kant, Troeltsch, Schweitzer, Blumhardt, Kutter, Thurneysen, Kierkegaard, Calvin, Luther, supplied Barth with a number of theological ideas that were hurled at his puzzled theological reading public in his *Roemerbrief* and other works. Barth attracted Conservatives by his pious phrases, borrowed from Luther and Calvin, charmed the Liberals by his frequent departure from historic Christian theology, and mystified all by his dialectical *modus demonstrandi*. From beginning to end (and today he has lost much of his popularity in continental Europe) he was a *Religionsphilosoph* rather than a theologian, and more and more this modern theologian is compelled by the logic of his system to go over to the Modernists. Dr. Monsma shows very clearly that Barth's idea of revelation is "threatened with collapse," indeed, that it fails at every point of application to the Christian doctrine.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

The God whom We Ignore. By John Kennedy. The Macmillan Company, New York. 260 pages, 5½×7½. Price, \$2.00.

This is another book among the thousands published in our day which by the use of pious phraseology makes it appear that it is preaching a religion that is Christian, while in reality it is not. Evidently the old-time creeds, founded upon the Bible as upon the unerring Word of God, are not the creeds of the writer of this book. We take this from his own words. He says:

"This old-time 'science,' or cosmogony, can be traced all through the Bible, is latent in our Psalms, and indeed many of our hymns, and is the basis on which were framed the old-time creeds. What are we to do about it? We must simply regard it as the setting into which revelation had to fit, but not as revelation itself. We do not throw away a rich jewel as worthless because its *setting* is old-fashioned. We may either use it in its old setting or place it in a new setting. That depends very largely on our temperament. If we are so sophisticated that we cannot think historically, we may frame new creeds and write new hymns to express our conviction that God is revealed in Christ, and for some people that may be a real help. But we cannot rewrite the Bible or repudiate many of our old-time hymns without throwing away as worthless some classical religious jewels." (Pages 102, 103.)

In the chapter on "The Significance of Jesus" we expect to find, if anywhere in the book, a clear, clean-cut statement in reference to the deity of Christ and His real saviorhood in becoming the sinner's Substitute. But this is what we found:

"The *quality* of eternal life is made manifest in Jesus. That quality is made manifest in the redeeming acts of Jesus. We see His whole life as an act of redemption, in thought, word, and deed. We see in Him what seems to us to be an overplus of energy spending itself freely for the temporal and eternal good of men, but which is for God a manifestation of His inexhaustible sufficiency. It is in that light we must regard the miracles of Jesus. The divine spirit is not straitened. God has not used Himself up in the creation and maintenance of the world. There is inexhaustible power in the living God, which seeks to pour itself out in beneficence to man. Jesus forces us to give up our notion of the universe as a closed system and to feel the power of the living God, who is above all things and in them and expressing His own nature as redeeming love in every channel open to His grace. In Jesus we see the redemptive activity of God. We behold the Father. We break through phenomena to the God behind the phenomena and find Him revealed not as Universal Indifference but as Redemptive Love. It is the life surrendered to the God so revealed and which is energized by the redemptive spirit that possessed the Man of Nazareth which is the Christian life and that is life indeed. The Christian life therefore is the life of union with God, the life of the surrendered will and mind and heart to the goodness and truth and beauty we find in Jesus." (Pages 93—95.)

Christ's work according to Dr. Kennedy was an "*overplus of energy* spending itself freely for the temporal and eternal good of men but which is for God a manifestation of His inexhaustible sufficiency." According to the Scriptures "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us," Gal. 3:13.

As in the days of Christ, so today we have in the churches "blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch," Matt. 15:14. Says the Savior: "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men," Matt. 15:9.

J. H. C. Fritz

Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands — wohin? Von H. Kirßen, Pastor in Hannover. Verlag des Schriftenvereins (E. Klärner), Zwickau. 48 Seiten 5½/9. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 1.20.

Wir haben hier eine treffliche Darlegung der Schriftlehre von dem Wesen und der Aufgabe der Kirche und eine scharfe Abweisung der falschen Lehre der romanisierenden Lutheraner, die das Wesen der Kirche aus der unsichtbaren Gemeinschaft der Glaubenden in die sichtbare Gemeinschaft der Bekennenden verlegen und weiterhin die Kirche nicht anders kennen als Anstalt, äußeren Organismus. Wenn nun „das Wesen der Kirche aus der unsichtbaren Gemeinschaft der Glaubenden in die sichtbare Gemeinschaft der Bekennenden verlegt wird, so ergibt sich daraus die Notwendigkeit, auch die Heuchler und Scheingristen, die mali und improbi, die teilhaben an der *externa societas rituum*, zu wahren Gliedern der Kirche zu erheben, . . . wenigstens, wie Th. Harnack sich ausdrückt, zu „passiven Gliedern“. Man sucht „eine unmögliche Situation in der Kirche, nämlich die Duldung offenbaren Unglaubens und offener Gottlosigkeit, dogmatisch und moralisch vor sich selbst zu rechtfertigen“. Und was die Definition der Kirche als „Anstalt“ betrifft (Wilmor: „Die Kirche ist nicht eine Gesellschaft, nicht ein Haufe gläubiger Menschen . . ., sondern die Kirche ist von vorn herein ein lebendiger Organismus, ein aus Instituten, Berufen, Ämtern und Ständen gegliederter Organismus, und zwar ist sie das von Gott“), so verwechselt man nicht nur die Aufgabe der Kirche mit dem Wesen der Kirche, sondern es ist auch dahin gekommen, daß man die Aufgabe der Kirche falsch aufsaßt. Das Schlagwort ist: nicht Freikirche, sondern Volkskirche! Nun aber „soll es sich bei der Volkskirche um eine Kirche handeln, die nicht nur an das Volk sich wendet, sondern die das ganze Volk umfassen will und die es darum nicht nur mit dem einzelnen Menschen im Volk, sondern zugleich auch irgendwie mit dem Volk als Ganzem zu tun haben will“. Man sagt auf jener Seite, daß „die Kirche sich nicht beschränkt und beschränken kann auf die Bekehrung einzelner“ (das ist also die Sammlung der Gläubigen!), „sondern die „Durchbringung des Volkslebens mit den Lebenskräften des Evangeliums“ im Auge haben muß. . . . Wenn die Kirche nicht in einem Jenseits fern in den Wolken schweben, sondern ihren Sitz im Leben, ihre Wirklichkeit in dieser Geschichte haben will, dann muß sie auch in diese Welt und ihre Geschichte, in unser wie in jedes Volk eingehen und also Volkskirche werden“. Ähnliche Stimmen hört man ja auch hier in Amerika. Und da wollen wir uns von P. Kirßen sagen lassen, daß „eine solche Volkskirche als Massenkirche sich eben nur rechtfertigen läßt, solange man das Wesen der Kirche als *congregatio sanctorum* (Gemeinde der Heiligen) ausdrücklich verkundet und sie nur anseht als Anstalt für den Glauben und so sichtbare und unsichtbare Kirche auseinanderreißt“. — Es sei noch darauf hingewiesen, daß die Unsicherheit und Verwirrenheit in der Lehre von der Kirche zum großen Teil davon herrührt, daß man das Schriftprinzip hat fahren lassen und dafür die Erlebnistheologie eingetauscht hat. Wilmor: „Dogmatik ist derjenige Teil der Theologie, welcher die göttlichen Tatsachen der Erlösung des Menschengeschlechts darstellt, so wie dieselben von der christlichen Kirche erfahren und aufgefaßt werden. . . . Die subjektive Quelle der Dogmatik kann nichts anderes sein als die Erfahrung, die persönliche Beteiligung an jenen göttlichen Tatsachen. . . . Die weiteren Erfahrungen, die noch vor uns liegen, beziehen sich auf das

Wesen der Kirche und auf die letzten Dinge, die Eschatologie." Ist es ein Wunder, daß die Theologen, die darauf warten, daß die „Erfahrung“ Licht in die Lehre von der Kirche bringt, mittlerweile nicht wissen, wie sie dran find?

Th. Engelder

Psychiatry. By Jacob D. Mulder, S.B., M.D. 170 pages, 5½×8. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. Price, \$1.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

We are very glad that a book of this nature has been published. The author describes the twenty-two classes of mental disturbances according to the classification adopted by the American Psychiatric Association and listed in Dr. Fritz's *Pastoral Theology* on page 214. He also illustrates the more common types of psychoses by "case histories," in which the patient's own words are used whenever possible. He adds, however, the warning: "Do not try to reach your own conclusions on the basis of information obtained in this treatise. In any case of what appears to be mental disturbance a qualified psychiatrist should always be consulted. The field of psychiatry is large, obscure, and full of difficult problems, even to the specialist." The author writes from the Christian viewpoint. While we do not agree with him in limiting "demonism as the New Testament speaks of," "to that age of special miracles," we rejoiced to read his frank endorsement of the Scriptural doctrine of total depravity. "The problem why the mental patient evidences in thought, speech, and actions, besides the abnormal which could be expected, so much that is morally wrong, is a dreadful reality daily brought to our attention. The intelligence in mental disturbance is sick and no longer a safe guide; but why should the outflow of thought so frequently tend toward evil? Pride, jealousy, irritability, stubbornness, indolence, cursing, assault, and even murder are frequently observed. The only explanation is God's conclusion in regard to man at the time of the Flood, 'For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth,' Gen. 8:21; or, as a certain modern philosopher exclaimed, 'There is no crime so black but what its roots are found in every human heart.'" (P. 156.)

THEO. LAETSCH

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